

Prospects Learning Services Ltd
132-138 High Street
Bromley
Kent
BR1 1EZ

T 020 8313 7760
F 020 8464 3393

Ofsted helpline
08456 404045



29 March 2007

Mr Mark Sammes
The Headteacher
Manor Junior School
Fernhill Road
Cove
Farnborough
GU14 9DX

Dear Mr Sammes

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF MANOR JUNIOR SCHOOL

Introduction

Following my visit with Lily Evans, Additional Inspector, to your school on 20 and 21 March 2007, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in January 2006.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher and other teachers, a group of pupils, the vice chair of governors and a representative from the local authority (LA).

Context

Since the previous visit there have been no changes in the teaching staff. There are now no vacancies on the governing body.

Achievement and standards

Recently published national data confirm that there was some improvement in standards in 2006 national tests in both English and at Level 5 in mathematics. Pupils made better progress than the previous Year 6 but this was not enough to meet the school's targets. It also confirms that the school's own early analysis of the results of these tests identified accurately its key areas for improving achievement, enabling it to move forward with a renewed focus.

The school's detailed data on the attainment of the current Year 6 shows that pupils are on course to meet the school's targets in both English and mathematics, meaning that standards would then be broadly average in both subjects. The targets for pupils reaching the higher level also look likely to be met. Most pupils have made good progress so far during Year 6, with only a small proportion who have not made enough progress to meet the challenging targets. Those who are on the borderline of reaching the expected standards are receiving specially targeted support aimed at accelerating their progress before they take their tests. Pupils who attend these lessons are making good progress and some have already crossed the borderline.

Standards seen in lessons and in pupils' work are average overall in English and mathematics, although in Year 5 standards are below average.

Year 5 pupils are not on course to meet their targets in English and mathematics. This follows a Year 4 disrupted by difficulties with staffing and the quality of teaching, and an influx this year of new pupils from a variety of educational backgrounds. Unless the rate of progress in Year 5 improves, there will be a significant amount of lost ground to make up in Year 6. Pupils in Year 3 have made a good transition from Key Stage 1 and have made good progress.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2006:

- Improve achievement in English and mathematics – satisfactory progress

Personal development and well-being

Pupils' behaviour is good both in lessons, where they are very responsive to their teachers' expectations of them, and around the school during recreation periods. The atmosphere in the dining hall, for example, is peaceful and sociable. Pupils enjoy many aspects of school, including the fact that they are expected to work hard and do their best. They prefer their lessons to be challenging because they realise that this is the way to make progress. There is agreement that their work is very interesting. Pupils show a mature

response when reflecting on matters of significance in their lives. For example, they produced a range of art which showed that they had thought empathetically about bullying. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they are given to develop into responsible members of the school community. Particularly popular is the opportunity which Year 6 pupils have to look after the 'class monkey', when they are responsible for ensuring that routines are followed and behaviour is sensible.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching is good overall, similar to the findings during the previous visit, with examples of outstanding practice. Planning is detailed and generally offers appropriate challenge across the ability range. Use of questioning and discussion is strong and encourages pupils' enthusiasm to participate. There are good opportunities for pupils to make progress and develop their confidence by sharing their ideas.

The school makes good use of assessment data in order to identify areas for development, both on the level of whole school planning and at the level of individual pupils. At pupil level it is used well to identify those who are not making enough progress and to plan and evaluate the type of support they need. A more recent improvement, which is not yet sufficiently embedded, is the increasing consistency with which teachers use assessment information to plan lessons which meet the needs of all pupils. In a challenging Year 6 English lesson involving selecting and using the most appropriate language for report writing, pupils made outstanding progress because they were working on tasks which had been planned to meet their identified needs.

The more accurate assessment of the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, noted at the previous visit, means that teachers have the information they need to plan an appropriate balance of challenge and support for them. While the level of challenge in lessons is generally planned to cover the full range of pupils' needs, in some mathematics lessons the examples explained do not always relate to the work set for lower attaining pupils.

Pupils, particularly the older ones, have a developing understanding of their own progress in English and mathematics, their targets for improvement and what they need to do in order to meet them. There is good evidence to suggest that as one target is met, the next is introduced. Teachers emphasise pupils' targets clearly and in Year 6 pupils know what to do to improve their levels in national curriculum tests. The improvement in the quality of marking has been instrumental in increasing pupils' understanding of their own progress. There is now more consistency in the amount of developmental advice which is given in marking, although there remain some teachers who do not offer enough advice. There is also more use of peer and self

assessment and when this happens pupils show increased understanding of how to improve their work.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2006:

- Ensure that teachers use assessment information accurately to provide work to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties – satisfactory progress

Leadership and management

The good improvement noted on the previous visit has been maintained. Although the school is not yet reaching all its challenging targets, close monitoring of its work means that the school has a clear idea of areas for improvement and knows what needs to be done in order to make these changes. The school has identified the under-achievement in Year 5 and has appropriate plans in place to address it.

The school's main priority is to improve achievement, especially in English and mathematics, and this is where the school's management team, at all levels, is placing a strong and sustained focus. The role of subject leaders and members of the improving standards team is well integrated to provide a coherent system of extra provision and evaluation for pupils who are identified as needing it.

Members of staff, including learning support assistants, comment favourably on the way in which clearer systems and organisation are providing greater efficiency and more consistency of practice.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2006:

- Improve leadership and management, especially in relation to monitoring and improving teaching and learning – good progress
- Strengthen the role of governors and senior managers in holding the school to account in all areas of its work – because of previous good progress no judgement has been made in this area.

External support

The quality of support given to the school by the LA is good. They monitor the school's improvement closely and identify accurately areas for further development. They carry out their role well because they have a very realistic idea of how far the school has come and what remains to be done. They offer good support in the form of training and advice from consultants.

Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed

Priorities for further improvement

- To accelerate the progress of pupils in Year 5 so that they have a more secure basis for sustaining improvement in Year 6.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Walker
Additional Inspector