

Tribal Group
1-4 Portland
Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR
T 0845 123 6001
F 0845 123 6002

T 08456 40 40 40
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



25 June 2007

Mrs K Dhanecha
The Headteacher
Park Way Primary School
Park Way
Maidstone
Kent
ME15 7AH

Dear Mrs Dhanecha

Ofsted Monitoring of Schools with Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 19 June 2007, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the staff, pupils, chair of governors and local authority officers for the time they gave to help me with my work.

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.

As a result of the inspection on 1 and 2 November 2006, the school was asked to:

- raise achievement particularly in writing and science
- improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that all lessons are suitably challenging and that they maintain a brisk pace
- ensure that leadership and management remain focused on raising pupils' achievement and improving provision, and devise sharp indicators for the school improvement plan to measure success.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievements.

The steady decline in standards experienced over the last three years has been checked. Standards are rising but, although continuing to improve, are still below average. Recent achievement is satisfactory overall but is uneven across and within classes. The school's tracking data shows that pupils who are capable of higher attainment, although now making satisfactory progress, have not progressed as quickly as other pupils and most are not achieving the expected higher levels of attainment.

The school now has appropriate systems to track the progress that pupils make and a baseline has been established from which future progress in English, mathematics and science can be measured. Pupils have meaningful targets, which most understand, and those targets are displayed prominently in classrooms. Teachers are increasingly aware of the progress that pupils make towards their targets and keep appropriately detailed records of pupils' achievements so that they can formally review their progress every six weeks. Where underachievement is identified, appropriate programmes are being developed to address this. However, current systems and procedures do not have a sharp enough focus on those at risk of underachieving in order to secure early intervention. Target setting is much improved but needs further refinement to make sure that all pupils have an appropriate degree of challenge, particularly the most able.

The profile of teaching has improved and no inadequate lessons were seen. The school's own monitoring is accurate and correctly identifies that although more teaching is good or better, and there are pockets of outstanding practice, teaching needs to be better if the pace of improvement is to be sustained. Assessment information is used well by some teachers to help plan the pupils' next steps for learning but this is not yet a strength of all teachers' planning. Although pupils in some classes are given appropriate success criteria and encouraged to assess their progress towards their learning objective, too often pupils are not sufficiently involved in this aspect of their learning.

Management systems and procedures aimed at evaluating the progress made in addressing the areas for improvement are developing and are becoming embedded. Regular monitoring of the school's work, particularly the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning, ensures that the headteacher and her senior team have an increasingly accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses. Monitoring is now clearly focused on raising attainment and improvement plans have explicit success criteria. Governors are now better informed and individual governors are linked to subject areas so that they can monitor progress more effectively.

The local authority statement of action has been revised, is closely aligned to the school's improvement plans, and addresses the areas for improvement. The local authority has provided a range of support which has been sharply focused on improving teaching and learning through developing the use of assessment. This has had a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and developing the capacity of subject leaders.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

Robert Ellis
Her Majesty's Inspector