

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



3 December 2008

Ms B Williams
The Headteacher
Cleobury Mortimer Primary School
Love Lane
Cleobury Mortimer
Kidderminster
Worcestershire
DY14 8PE

Dear Ms Williams

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave Deana Holdaway HMI and myself when we inspected your school on 2 December 2008, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during our visit. Please pass our thanks on to pupils and the chair of governors for their help during the day.

Since the previous inspection, three teachers have resigned their posts and one has taken maternity leave. Four new teachers have been appointed. There are new subject leaders for the Early Years Foundation Stage, English and science.

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 26 September 2007, the school was asked to:

- rectify the weaknesses in the matching of teaching to children's needs and in the range of the curriculum in the Reception Year
- ensure that teaching in all years takes full account of all pupils' needs and that it challenges the 'average' and more capable pupils in particular
- help pupils to gain more independence as learners and provide them with clear guidance on how to improve their work
- increase the involvement of middle managers, such as subject leaders, in the school's self-evaluation and in driving improvement.

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

At the time of the previous inspection, provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) was inadequate. The school has made particularly good progress in this area. Adults know the children well and ensure that the imaginative and broad curriculum matches their interests and abilities. Activities are well resourced and organised to secure good progress across all areas of learning. The children are confident and increasingly independent. They are keen to instigate conversations and happily put on aprons, or select apparatus to support their learning, without adult supervision. Throughout the day, adults seize all opportunities for learning and make every effort to extend language and learning by talking to the children. For example, during a play dough activity the teacher frequently reinforced earlier phonic learning and conversations about a map of the world and objects on the advent calendar which skilfully broadened the children's knowledge and understanding. The great majority of children are on course to meet the early learning goals, set for them nationally, by the beginning of Year 1.

Progress against the other improvements points has been inconsistent. The school sets challenging targets and senior leaders are able to identify which pupils are underperforming because of the half-termly checks on their progress. Suitable interventions are in place to raise standards. However, their impact is variable. For example, teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 show a continuing decline and standards are significantly below what is expected. The picture is more positive at the end of Key Stage 2 where, although national test results have yet to be validated, it is clear that standards are at least in line with the national average. A much higher proportion of pupils made the expected progress during the key stage than at the time of the previous inspection.

The school has placed a strong focus on improving aspects of teaching. Monitoring of teaching is regular. However, visits to lessons by inspectors and a scrutiny of work in books showed that too much teaching is still not challenging the average and higher ability pupils. For example, in a lesson focusing on speaking and listening, all pupils were working towards the same learning objective and there was insufficient expectation and challenge for the most articulate. Similarly, in mathematics and science books all pupils regularly worked towards the same learning objective but with different levels of support. Higher achieving pupils often have to complete the same activities as lower achievers before moving on to extension work. The school's assessment data indicates that in some year groups and subjects the proportion of pupils on track to achieve above age related expectations is well below the school's target.

Marking of pupils' work has improved and pupils confirm that it does help them understand how they can improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils routinely self assess the progress they have made at the end of a lesson and there is evidence in a minority of books of pupils responding thoughtfully to written comments made by their teachers. These developments, and the increased opportunities for pupils to show initiative and work collaboratively, demonstrate how the school has helped pupils gain more independence as learners.

Subject leaders are now more involved in the school's self-evaluation and drive for improvement. They appreciate the greater delegation of responsibilities since the previous inspection. They are using discussions with teachers, pupils and parents and book scrutinies to ensure that they have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas. Appropriate partnerships with other schools and good support from local authority consultants are building their capacity.

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

Yours sincerely

A.P. O'Malley
Her Majesty's Inspector