

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



Protect inspection

11 December 2008

Mrs Karen Crutchfield
The Headteacher
Caen Community Primary School
Caen Street
Braunton
Devon
EX33 1AD

Dear Mrs Crutchfield

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Caen Community Primary School

Following my visit with Robina Tomes, Additional Inspector, to your school on 9 and 10 December 2008, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in June 2008. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report 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.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Children and Young People's Services for Devon.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Redpath
H M Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Caen Community Primary School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 9 and 10 December 2008

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, and met with the headteacher, two governors, teachers and teaching assistants. Discussions also took place with pupils and a representative from the local authority.

Context

Since the time of the last inspection the school roll has fallen from 254 to 211 pupils. Four new teachers, including a deputy headteacher, have joined the school. Three teachers have left and two are on long term sick leave. A new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 leader has been appointed on a year's secondment facilitated by the local authority. Building work is in progress which is due to be completed by Easter 2009. This will provide three new classrooms, an information and communication technology (ICT) suite, a library and kitchen.

Achievement and standards

Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved in some respects since the last inspection but remain inadequate overall. At Key Stage 1, standards in reading have improved and they are in line with the national average. At Key Stage 2, there has been improvement in mathematics and pupils' attainment is close to the national average. However, too few pupils reach the higher levels in science in national tests and the standard of writing across the school continues to be inadequate. Scrutiny of pupils' books and evidence from lesson observations suggest that pupils' achievement has improved since September 2008. The general trend of decline seen in recent years has been halted, although there remains inconsistency between classes. The school has set up a good system for checking pupils' progress and for setting targets for improvement. The effectiveness of this system for accurately measuring pupils' progress is limited since some previous assessments of pupils' attainment are unreliable. The school has recognised the need for more accurate assessment and is strengthening the moderation of pupils' work. Several initiatives have been introduced to raise standards, particularly in literacy, but it is too early to determine their full impact.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- raise standards in English, mathematics and science and improve pupils' progress – satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and feel the school has improved recently. Many report lessons are more challenging and 'more fun'. Pupils are also

positive about the new behaviour systems and are eager to gain 'table points' and enjoy their discovery time. Behaviour is generally calm in classes and around the school. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for healthy lifestyles and are able to give clear reasons for their choices. Relationships with staff and each other are good and pupils have opportunities to make suggestions for change, for example through the school council.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection. Staff have worked hard to raise standards and there is evidence of recent success, although progress is not yet consistent across the school. Pupils are generally engaged in their work and are responding well to teachers' higher expectations of both work and behaviour. Planning has improved and teachers are working together to provide more stimulating lessons which take closer account of pupils' different abilities. In a few lessons the pace of work is too slow which leads to pupils losing concentration. Also, there are limited opportunities for more capable pupils to develop their own ideas and to work more independently.

The use of marking has improved following the introduction of a school policy, although there is inconsistent practice between classes. The best examples include helpful suggestions for improvement and the involvement of pupils in reviewing their own work. In some classes, marking is less effective since teachers do not ensure that pupils make corrections to their work.

The school has introduced initiatives to strengthen the curriculum. For example, a shared approach to teaching literacy is having an impact on raising standards at Key Stage 1. Not all subjects get enough time on the curriculum and pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to study ICT. The school has been more successful in planning for pupils who are attaining below the national average than in planning for higher attaining pupils. This is an understandable first step and the school is currently reviewing its planning to ensure there is a better balance between subjects and sufficient challenge for all groups. The current building works limit the outdoor learning opportunities for children in the EYFS.

The recently appointment special educational needs coordinator has introduced a system to support pupils with a learning difficulty and/or disability. However, this is still at an early stage and the impact of support is not yet clearly assessed. Individual educational plans are in place although, in some cases, pupils' targets for improvement lack detail. There are a few pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour, especially in the playground, but the school is providing appropriate support for them through a learning mentor scheme. Links with external services ensure pupils who have a learning difficulty and/or disability receive appropriate specialist support.

There are good procedures for safeguarding pupils and statutory requirements are met. Pupils feel safe and cared for and comment that the school has been extra careful to make the school safe during the ongoing building works.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- ensure that teaching promotes high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work rate through interesting activities that motivate pupils to learn – satisfactory
- develop systems to identify the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at an early stage, and provide them with appropriate work and support – satisfactory.

Leadership and management

The school has established a senior leadership team which is working hard to move the school forward. At the time of the last inspection, senior leadership support for the headteacher was limited. The position of deputy headteacher was vacant and the responsibilities of subject leaders were unclear. A new deputy headteacher is now in post and the responsibilities of subject leaders have been clarified. Job descriptions are in place and support from external consultants is helping senior leaders to develop their roles. Most subject leaders are new to their roles and are not yet involved fully in monitoring their subjects across the school. As a result, not all policies are understood and implemented consistently by all staff, for example in writing. The school is using data more effectively to check pupils' progress and set targets for improvement. The leadership is aware of areas of strength and underperformance and has appropriate plans for improvement.

The governing body has worked closely with the local authority and headteacher to strengthen the school's leadership and management and to tackle areas of weakness. It has reorganised its committee structure to improve its knowledge of the school's work and to have a sharper focus on raising standards. Governors receive more detailed information and are in a better position to challenge the school's performance. As a result of the positive developments in governance, leadership and management, the school is in a stronger position to implement the necessary changes to secure improvement.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- strengthen leadership and management by developing an effective team of leaders and managers to support and implement necessary change – good.

External support

The school has benefited from good external support from the local authority and its School Improvement Partner. The School Improvement Partner has a clear understanding of the school, has helped the school to understand itself better and has contributed to its improvement. The local authority has given valued advice and support to the governing body on resolving personnel issues. It has brokered the secondment of an experienced teacher to strengthen the senior management team.

The local authority has also organised a good range of external advice and consultancy to support the headteacher, teachers and subject leaders. The positive impact of actions contained within the local authority's statement of action has been particularly evident in the improved school leadership and management.

Priorities for further improvement

No additional priorities have been given following this first monitoring visit and the school should continue its work on existing priorities.