

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



21 January 2009

Ms Perry
Burnt Oak Primary School
Cornwall Road
Gillingham
Kent
ME7 1LP

Dear Ms Perry

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 13 January 2009, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Could you convey my thanks to the chair of governors, the local authority adviser, teachers, teaching assistants and pupils that I met during the inspection?

The school moved into a new building in September 2008. The outside area is nearing completion and soon to incorporate large play areas, quiet areas, trees, planted borders, areas for children to plant and a small grassed area.

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 9 June 2008, the school was asked to:

- raise teachers' expectations of the amount of work that pupils should be able to complete in lessons and ensure that work is more closely matched to pupils' different abilities so that it offers appropriate challenge for all
- provide short, more varied tasks and activities in lessons so that all pupils are fully interested and more motivated to learn
- keep more careful track of the progress pupils are making by ensuring that teachers' assessments of pupils' work are accurate and by focusing on pupils' learning when observing lessons
- ensure that all pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making inadequate progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement. In relation to monitoring pupils' progress and focusing on pupils' learning in lesson observations, satisfactory progress has been made.

The school moved into a new building in September 2008. The outside area is nearing completion and will soon incorporate large play areas, quiet areas and areas for pupils to plant

In 2008, achievement at both key stages was inadequate. Standards achieved by pupils at both key stages were inadequate. Pupils achieved standards that were similar to 2007 in Key Stage 1 with the exception of reading which improved. Standards in Key Stage 2 in mathematics, English and science showed a marked decline on the previous year and are inadequate. The evidence for this year's pupils is more positive. Tracking shows that pupils are working more closely to their predicted targets in the main, due to the effective intervention strategies implemented by the senior leadership team. Pupils at risk of underachieving are identified quickly and given targeted support which is working effectively.

Pupils have settled well into their new environment and have commented that they enjoy being a part of the new school. Pupils who were interviewed were firmly of the opinion that behaviour has improved this term compared to the previous academic year and that they enjoy coming to school more now that poor behaviour is being tackled well. The levels of external and internal exclusions have fallen on 2008 and pupils have stated that lessons are less disruptive. The level of attendance in 2008 was below the national average, although evidence for the present year indicates attendance has further improved on the previous year's performance.

Measures put in place to improve teaching and learning are yet to have a positive impact on the progress pupils are making in lessons. However, there are too many satisfactory lessons and pupils are not always challenged to do their best. During the monitoring visit no good or outstanding lessons were observed by the inspector. In better lessons pupils were given short tasks to work on, although there was little variety in the activities undertaken. Too many pupils finish work early or do not complete work, which teachers do not always notice. In some lessons pupils are set the same level of work without being given the opportunity to extend their learning if they find the work too easy. Year 6 groups are now setted in mathematics, English and science and this has enabled teachers to identify appropriate levels of work, although within sets pupils do not have an opportunity to work on different tasks or at a different pace.

Pupils now have a clear understanding of their National Curriculum targets. However, it is not always clear how well they are progressing against these targets. Although pupils report that homework is set regularly, this along with lesson activities is not always marked well. Teachers' comments in work books do not enable pupils to have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their level of work.

The work of the inclusion unit, pupils remaining with their teachers for the duration of each key stage, and an effective behaviour policy have reduced the amount of

disruptive behaviour within the school. Internal and external exclusions have sharply reduced, internal exclusions by 80% compared to the first term of 2007.

Governors, the local authority and pupils within the school are of the opinion that the headteacher has managed the move to the new building extremely well. The senior leadership team has created a culture within the school and staff are beginning to focus on raising expectations and improving achievement. However, more work needs to be done to improve the quality of lessons. Management actions to improve teaching and learning have reduced the proportion of inadequate teaching and have enabled observers to take a sharper focus on pupils' learning. Even though the amount of good lessons has improved, there are no outstanding lessons observed within the school and the proportion of satisfactory and inadequate lessons remains too high. Teachers have received professional development to support them in developing and delivering numeracy and literacy lessons and in establishing National Curriculum targets for all pupils. The National Curriculum support has been effective. Assessment practice is now consistent throughout the school enabling teachers and senior leaders to have a clear understanding of the progress pupils are making. The many intervention measures implemented to raise achievement are starting to enable the school to achieve its targets better. The checking of the consistency of teacher assessment is still in its infancy, although teacher assessment in 2008 was accurate.

The support provided by the local authority has primarily focused on building the capacity of the senior leadership team and supporting the school in delivering its key priorities. The local authority recognises that more support in developing teachers' skills in the classroom is required.

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

Yours sincerely

Samantha Morgan-Price
Her Majesty's Inspector