

Prospects Learning Services Ltd
Prospects House
19 Elmfield Road
Bromley, Kent
BR1 1LT

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

Direct T 020 8315 1250
Direct F 020 8315 1279
Peter.Gale@ofsted.gov.uk



27 January 2009

Miss Liz McIntosh
Headteacher
Poverest Primary School
Tillingbourne Green
St Mary Cray
Orpington
BR5 2JD

Dear Miss McIntosh

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 20 January 2009, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please also pass on my thanks to the chair of governors, the partners working to support the school and the pupils for their time.

As a result of the inspection on 19 and 20 June 2008, the school was asked to:

- raise achievement and standards in mathematics and science, particularly in Years 3 to 6
- improve the quality of teaching and learning so that they are consistently good throughout the school
- build on the work already under way to improve pupils' attendance
- ensure that a suitable outdoor area is provided for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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' achievement. The school is taking appropriate action to improve teaching through training, support and coaching from the local authority and from London Challenge advisory teachers. It has introduced more frequent assessment of pupils and increased monitoring of their progress through improved tracking systems. There is more to do to ensure consistency in practice following further changes in staff.

Following poor results in the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 2008, the school is working hard with support from the local authority and London Challenge to raise standards. Effective teaching, improved tracking and targeted intervention for groups of pupils are accelerating the progress made in Year 6, particularly in science. School data and inspection evidence show that these pupils are on track to meet their targets in English, mathematics and science. This will represent satisfactory achievement



during their time in the school. However, achievement and standards remain variable in other year groups in Key Stage 2.

Visits to a variety of lessons confirmed the headteacher's view that teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory. This represents an improvement since the inspection in June 2008. Satisfactory teaching, coupled with effective tracking and intervention, means that pupils are currently making satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 5. However, the school is aware that teaching and learning will need to be better for these pupils to make up for underachievement in the past. Standards are lower than they should be, most notably in reading. Although teaching and learning have improved, some of the problems identified at the time of the last inspection persist. The pace of lessons is not always fast enough and more able pupils would benefit from higher levels of challenge. Marking has improved. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and pupils appreciate the written suggestions on how to improve.

An area of the school where support and leadership have been particularly successful in securing improvement is in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The building of an appropriate and well-designed outdoor area and the support for, and professional development of, staff has meant that children are experiencing challenging and interesting learning opportunities. They are making at least satisfactory progress and reaching the standards expected for their age. Attendance is also improving as a result of work with partners. Current figures are slightly below the national average but are in line with the average for schools with comparable intakes. This represents progress from the previous inspection and will help in the drive for higher standards.

The local authority's statement of action meets requirements and contains appropriate strategies for supporting the school to improve. The school's own action plan has evolved from the statement of action through discussion between the headteacher, governors, London Challenge and the local authority. Support has had a positive impact on outcomes for pupils in Reception Year and Year 6. It has been most effective in improving teaching where staff have had continuous service. Overall, the impact of support in securing improvements across the school has been undermined by difficulties with recruitment and retention. Further planned changes in staffing mean that teaching and learning remain fragile. Sustaining the progress made so far is dependent on establishing a permanent and stable staff.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Gale
H M Inspector