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30 April 2010

Mrs Sally Taylor  
Burton Green Primary School  
Burton Green  
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Dear Mrs Taylor

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave me when I inspected your school on 29 April 2010 and for the information which you provided during my visit. I also welcomed the opportunity to talk with staff, pupils, governors and the local authority locality adviser. Please pass on my thanks to all those involved.

As a result of the inspection on 6-7 October 2009, the school was asked to:

- raise attainment in English and mathematics and improve the progress made by all pupils
- by July 2010 increase the proportion of consistently good teaching across the school, by:
  - making sure that the assessments of pupils' work are accurate
  - using assessment information more effectively to plan lessons which meet the needs of all pupils in the class.
- improve procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of teachers to better identify the link between teaching, learning and progress in classrooms
- improve safeguarding procedures, by:
  - ensuring that policies are reviewed regularly to meet the most up-to-date regulations
  - ensuring that all staff receive training in child protection.

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.



Since the previous inspection the senior leadership team has been expanded. This now includes the headteacher, the deputy headteacher who is the special educational needs coordinator and Key Stage 1 'lead learner', a 'lead learner' with responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and another for Key Stage 2. A fifth member is responsible for assessment and transition arrangements. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage was restructured in January 2010 to create an Early Years Foundation Stage unit. Two teachers and two teaching assistants now work together to deliver provision for children in the Reception Year and Nursery Class.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of knowledge and understanding that are well below those typically expected for their age. The children's speaking and listening skills and personal, social and emotional development are generally very weak. The majority of children make satisfactory progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage unit and many make good gains in their social development.

Most children enter Key Stage 1 working below the expected levels for their age group. Attainment at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 in 2009 continued a declining trend. Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics was exceptionally low because pupils failed to make sufficient progress over time through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

In the current academic year, carefully thought through actions such as the 'learning groups', changes to the curriculum and more rigorous monitoring systems are beginning to tackle underachievement and to accelerate pupils' learning. The school's latest assessment information indicates that the majority of pupils in most year groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making satisfactory progress. Pupils' rates of progress, however, remain uneven across the school, with the progress in some year groups lagging behind that found in others. In the current Year 6, around 80% of the pupils are on target to achieve Level 4+ in English, mathematics and science. This would bring pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 broadly in line with national expectations, representing a significant improvement when compared to the school's results in previous years.

A comprehensive whole-school system to track pupils' assessments has been implemented and is rigorously monitored by school leaders. This provides a reliable overview of progress made by different groups of pupils and a baseline from which to secure further improvement. Tracking information is now used routinely and effectively within the school's monitoring and evaluation systems. For example, as part of the regular pupils' progress meetings which senior leaders hold with class teachers. A range of activities undertaken with local authority advisers and an external consultant has had a strong impact on improvement. For instance, moderation of set pieces of work and book scrutinies has resulted in accurate assessments of pupils' work in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and improved the



processes used to record and report children's development in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Senior leaders have undertaken a series of comprehensive lesson observations - many alongside external partners - and these provide an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and learning. The proportion of good or better teaching, at around 65%, has increased by 36% since the last inspection. This places the school on track to reach its target of 80% good or better teaching by the end of the current academic year. The feedback teachers receive, as a result of lesson observations, is much sharper and focuses on the quality of the pupils' learning. This guidance is used alongside other strategies, including pupils' progress meetings and recent evaluations of the impact of initiatives, such as 'monster maths', paired reading and 'phonic phases', to identify the link between teaching, learning and progress in classrooms more effectively. Consequently, teachers and senior leaders are able to make more informed decisions about what actions they need to implement to accelerate progress and raise attainment further.

Classroom teachers throughout the school each maintain a detailed file of pupils' information and tracking data compiled in accordance with a standardised format. This good quality information now plays a key role in teachers' planning and monitoring. As a result, teachers are using assessment information more confidently both to plan lessons which are more closely matched to the needs of pupils and to identify where individual learning support is needed to halt underachievement. Teachers are becoming more adept at assessing pupils' progress during lessons and in modifying lesson plans and activities accordingly, in order to go over points that pupils may not have understood or to move on more quickly than originally planned to speed up learning. The system for allocating teaching assistants has been reviewed and revised. As a result, teachers and teaching assistants work much more closely together to implement support and to monitor and assess the progress of individual children and groups of pupils. Teachers' marking in books generally provides pupils with feedback about what they need to do to improve their work further. Lessons are increasingly incorporating opportunities for pupils to act on the guidance they are given, although this strategy has not yet become firmly established. While the quality of marking in books is improving, the school recognises that it remains too variable and that there is more work to do to ensure consistently effective practice is embedded.

Although in the early stages of development, pupils are being involved in assessing their own progress more often and actively helped to understand the levels at which they are working. For instance, appropriately labelled examples of pupils' work displayed throughout the school model what writing at the different levels looks like. This gives pupils a clear indication of what they need to aim for. Most pupils know their learning targets and what progress they are making and are keen to talk about these. This boosts pupils' self-confidence and enhances their enjoyment of learning because they gain a clearer sense of their own achievements.



The school now meets statutory requirements for safeguarding. An up-to-date single central record of staff is in place. Relevant policies have been reviewed and updated. Staff and governors have a clear understanding of their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and have completed recent and appropriate training. Procedures, such as those for recording and reporting accidents and risk assessment, are satisfactory. Pupils report feeling safe and happy and the school works closely with other agencies to protect vulnerable pupils.

The headteacher monitors the school's actions frequently and rigorously. The new leadership team has gained a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement within the school. They have established a greater awareness among staff of the next steps required to raise standards further. The headteacher and all of the staff have pulled together and worked well as a team. Morale is high. Professional development activities have contributed effectively to improvement. The governing body is working closely with the local authority governance team to develop their knowledge and understanding in order to strengthen the support and challenge they provide for the school. Support from the local authority throughout the last year has been extensive and highly effective in helping the school implement the actions needed to tackle the areas for improvement.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Ripley  
Her Majesty's Inspector

