

Tribal Group
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0845 123 6001
Direct F 0845 123 6002
Direct email: sarah.cartlidge@tribalgroup.com

17 June 2010

Ms Nicky Powell
The Headteacher
Crawford Primary School
Crawford Road
London
SE5 9NF

Dear Ms Powell

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Crawford Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 9 and 10 June 2010, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in October 2010. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen McShane
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Crawford Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 9 and 10 June 2010

Evidence

Her Majesty's Inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the senior and middle management teams, a group of governors, a group of pupils and a representative from the local authority.

Context

A new headteacher has been appointed and will take up post in September following the retirement of the current headteacher. The deputy headteacher, seconded by the local authority, will leave the school at the end of the summer term. One teacher has resigned and another has requested to reduce her hours of work at the school.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

The data available confirm that during this academic year pupils have made satisfactory progress in all year groups. While there is evidence of good progress being made by some pupils, there is no consistency. In a minority of year groups data show that pupils are making better progress in reading, whilst in other year groups progress in reading is satisfactory and pupils are making better progress in mathematics or writing. This uneven picture is confirmed in analysis of books and in the observations of teaching. Learning seen in lessons was at least satisfactory during this monitoring inspection and no inadequate learning was observed. Pupils are achieving more as there is a better match of activities to their needs, more targeted interventions and sensitive support from a range of different adults. At times, however, good progress is not sustained and built upon because pupils are required to remain passively listening for too long or high expectations are not sustained through the lesson or a series of lessons. Therefore, while the picture since the last visit is broadly of improvement in rates of pupils' progress, this is still too inconsistent. For many pupils there is a significant legacy of underachievement and standards remain low. In order to raise standards pupils need to make consistently accelerated progress to give them the best chance of achieving their potential.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities continue to make satisfactory progress and the school's evidence shows that those in receipt of certain targeted interventions (for example 'Every Child Counts' and 'Reading Recovery') are making good progress.

The systems for tracking individual pupils' attainment are improving. Various arrangements have been put in place to monitor and assess pupils' work. Moderation of work, scrutiny of pupils' books and pupil progress meetings that have been introduced all contribute to the picture. This year the school has administered

optional tests from the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Authority (QCDA) to further check progress. During the inspection it became apparent that, despite these many activities, there is still a lack of confidence on the part of senior managers in the levels that are being assigned to a minority of pupils. The inspector found that this lack of confidence was justified. The impact of this is significant as it is affecting the precision with which teachers and the school can monitor the progress of pupils and adapt provision. It also affects the ability of the school leaders, including the governors, and others, to make accurate judgements about how well the school is improving. As a matter of urgency, and certainly by the beginning of the new school year, this must be remedied. It is imperative that when teachers receive their new classes they are provided with secure information on each child that clearly indicates their agreed and confirmed current levels of attainment.

Pupils are diligent and hard working at Crawford. They listen well in class and the vast majority settle to work quickly and purposefully. They want to do their best and many are aspirational.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Behaviour continues to be good. Pupils are polite and engaging. They play and work well together. They are very committed to their school. Pupils said they feel safe and they felt that their school gets on well together with no racism. They play energetically on the playground and have a good understanding of health related issues.

The effectiveness of provision

The quality of teaching has improved since the last visit; all lessons observed were at least satisfactory. This confirms the recent monitoring by the senior management team and the local authority. It is clear that teachers are taking on board the professional development they have received and are working hard to improve their practice.

Detailed planning is in place and this is ensuring that there is a clear structure to all lessons leading to little time being lost between activities. Resources are well prepared. Additional adult support is clearly targeted and, in many cases, is sensitively moving children on by gently prompting their learning and clarifying misconceptions. A range of different activities for different ability groups is now evident in all classes.

There is still not enough teaching that is consistently good. Learning objectives are now evident in all lessons and these are then divided for the class in to what pupils 'must do', 'could do' and 'should do'. However, the effectiveness of the learning objectives and this system to match them to groups varies through the school. In the best practice the objective is appropriately informed by pupils' current level, is challenging and drives the teaching, the activities, the input of additional adults and the ongoing assessment through the whole lesson. In the best practice observed,

the 'must , could and should' are clearly related to the lesson objective, expressed in child-friendly language and are used as targets for identified groups to aim for which can then be assessed. In some lessons, however, the 'must' target is a general target for the whole class with 'should' and 'could' seen as extension activities. This leads to some pupils not being challenged enough, being happy with achieving the minimum and inaccurate assessment of whether pupils had learned anything new in a lesson or merely achieved a 'must' objective.

While there has been an improvement in the range of activities offered to different groups, when pupils are together at the beginning or end of the lesson there is still too much dependency on teacher-talk to the whole class with pupils asked to put up their hands and reply to questions. Too often this leads to dialogue between a few pupils and the teacher and many other pupils becoming bored and disengaged. At times, introductions are too long and pupils are merely listening rather than engaged in new learning.

The assessment of pupils' work is improving. Pupils know their individual targets and the systems for using these in the classroom, recording and monitoring are being further refined in school so that these can be more consistently effective. Marking continues to be regular and encouraging for pupils. There remain inconsistencies through the school. In the best practice seen, a dialogue emerges between the teacher and pupil so that improvements come about quickly. Teachers are using a wider range of assessment techniques during lessons, including 'thumbs up if you understand', mini-plenaries as the lesson progresses, and self-assessment. Some of this practice is effective and leads to better learning. Some of it is rather meaningless as the pupils' answers are not responded to adequately.

Interventions are becoming increasingly effective in supporting those pupils who are finding aspects of learning difficult or have special educational needs and/or disabilities and there are appropriate plans in place to develop these further. Appealing activities are on offer to pupils. Teachers use high quality texts to stimulate discussion, and topics in history, in particular, generate lively interest. There are a number of educational outings available that enhance learning and it is clear that the pupils benefit a great deal from these. The forthcoming outings that are looming as a reward for good behaviour are generating particular excitement.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas of improvement:

- secure consistently good teaching that accelerates pupils' rates of progress with their learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers receive the appropriate professional development to help them plan lessons which enable all pupils to make at least good progress
 - making sure that senior leaders regularly check that the actions taken to improve the quality of teachers' lesson plans are accelerating the rate of pupils' progress
 - ensuring that all lesson planning for English, mathematics and science includes tasks matched to pupils' differing learning needs – satisfactory

- immediately secure consistent use of assessment in each class so that:
 - marking makes clear to pupils how to improve their work
 - the use of targets means that all pupils know the next steps they need to take to improve their work
 - lessons are well matched to pupils' learning needs so that they make more rapid progress in gaining knowledge, skills and understanding – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Morale is high in the school and there is a commitment and energy to improve things for pupils. Working closely with partners, the senior leadership team has provided opportunities for teachers to develop their practice and has regularly monitored the quality of lessons. It has offered support to individuals and taken strong action where necessary. The joint observations carried out during the inspection showed a generally accurate match between the inspector's judgements and those of the senior leadership team. At times the team gave too much emphasis to evaluating the processes of teaching rather than on the impact of these on learning and progress. The leadership team has started some good work in pulling together the different observations of individual teachers and identifying their ongoing priorities to develop their teaching further. It would be appropriate to complete this piece of work by the end of this academic year so that a clear agenda for further improvement can be agreed with all teachers.

Middle leaders demonstrate that they are clearly benefiting from the coaching and development opportunities. They have taken action to improve systems in the school and now have a much stronger grasp on the priorities for the school. They are determined that the improvements made will now be built upon and ongoing help remains in place to support them in this.

The governors are continuing to improve their effectiveness. They have a realistic view of the school. They are becoming much more knowledgeable and the standards committee, in particular, through systematically examining information is able to challenge the school much more effectively. The governors led a very effective recruitment process. They took firm action in order to secure the best candidate.

The school is now entering into a period of transition with the departure of the headteacher and the seconded deputy headteacher who has made a significant contribution to the school's improvement. Currently, the plans in place to ensure that this will take place without jeopardising the improvements made in the school are inadequate. The remaining senior and middle leadership teams are developing their skills and do have a growing grasp of teaching and learning and what needs to be done. However, the roles and responsibilities and accountability structure as the school goes into the next phase have not been clarified, including those of the local authority. The actions necessary to accelerate learning have not yet been agreed. It is very important that plans are put in place quickly so that the improvements seen to date can be built upon, sustained and embedded.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas of improvement:

- build the capacity of the school's leadership by:
 - building the capacity of the senior leadership team as soon as possible
 - strengthening the leadership skills of middle managers by the end of this term, with a plan for their ongoing development for the rest of the year – satisfactory.

External support

The local authority continues to offer effective support to the school. The support from the literacy and numeracy consultants is particularly appreciated by middle managers. The partnership brokered with a local outstanding school is providing good support to individual teachers allowing them to reflect and improve their practice. The local authority has a good knowledge of the school and rightly assessed that teaching and learning need to become more consistently good and the progress of pupils further accelerated. It has recognised that the improvements made are potentially fragile, the school is still dependent on external support and that plans to enable existing senior and middle leaders to continue their work alongside the arrival of a new headteacher are not yet adequate.

Priorities for further improvement

- By the end of term bring together and moderate the assessment information on each child in English and mathematics and assign a secure and agreed level.
- Put plans in place with clear responsibilities and success criteria assigned to the local authority, senior and other managers to ensure that there is a smooth transition into the new academic year and no time is lost in implementing improvement activities to further accelerate the progress of pupils.