

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



4 December 2008

Mr Stephen Spooner
Headteacher
Princess May Primary School
Princess May Road
London
N16 8DF

Dear Mr Spooner

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 24 November 2008, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please convey my thanks for their help to the chair of governors, and the staff and pupils who spoke to me.

Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes to the staffing, with several teachers leaving, and a number of new teachers and support staff taking up their posts. In particular, a number of new appointments have been made to leadership posts. In addition, extensive improvements have been made to the outdoor provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

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 12 November 2007, the school was asked to:

- develop teachers' skills so that they can better cater for the wide range of pupils' needs in their classes
- develop the skills of subject leaders so that they contribute more effectively to the drive to raise pupils' achievement
- improve the provision for pupils with learning difficulties in order to accelerate their progress, particularly in reading and writing.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that, at this time, the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Clear leadership from the headteacher and deputy has underpinned many of the improvements made. They have led staff in consolidating the improving behaviour noted at the last inspection, and the behaviour seen in lessons during the inspection

was good. This provides a secure base for the improved teaching and learning in the school. Teachers' skills have improved and the quality of lessons is much better than at the last inspection. Teaching has improved steadily over the last year. By the start of September, unsatisfactory teaching had largely been eliminated and there is now more good teaching. This is the main factor in the much better progress that pupils now make in lessons. Along with the recruitment of new staff with specific expertise, the regular and rigorous monitoring of lessons by the headteacher and deputy has driven this improvement. Teachers have been told unequivocally about strengths and weaknesses in their practice and so helped to improve. The better matching of work to pupils' needs is now an established feature of lessons. The vastly improved systems to track pupils' progress mean the school is well placed to refine this further. This is a necessary improvement if the legacy of weak learning in the past is to be overcome by even more good lessons. The previous weaknesses in teaching and learning mean that the much better achievement in class is not reflected consistently in the most recent test results, although there have been some improvements. The school's tracking shows that current pupils are on course to capitalise on the better education they are receiving and to gain much better results in 2009, particularly at the end of Year 6.

The recruitment of new staff with specific expertise in subject leadership, along with support and training to improve leadership roles among established colleagues, means that subject leaders make a much more valuable contribution to improving pupils' achievement. In particular, the monitoring of planning has enabled leaders to help their colleagues to refine how they match work to the needs of pupils. Teachers are now planning different work for different groups of pupils to match their differing needs much more consistently and, as a result, progress in lessons is better. Subject leaders have rightly identified their need to be involved in observing lessons, so they can refine the advice they give to colleagues. A programme for this is due to start in January.

The improvement in provision for pupils with learning difficulties got off to a slow start, but has come on in leaps and bounds since the responsibility for this was taken over by the deputy headteacher. She has improved the organisation, including both the identification of need and the tracking of pupils' progress. The provision of intervention programmes to help those who fall behind has been expanded and refined to cater better for individuals' needs. New members of staff have been recruited and trained to support these pupils, and professional development for existing staff has increased their expertise in this area. The most recent assessments of progress show this has led to significant improvements in how these pupils achieve.

Management is much improved since the last inspection under the positive leadership of the headteacher and governors. This has focused relentlessly on improving teaching and learning, initially by insisting on a consistent approach to behaviour management. The Learning Trust, working on behalf of the local authority, has given good support to the school, particularly in providing professional

development for staff. The training and support given to senior staff has been especially beneficial in developing their leadership roles.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven Hill". The script is cursive and fluid.

Additional Inspector