

Serco Inspections
Cedar House
21 William Street
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 1LH

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

SERCO
Direct T 0121 683 3888



28 January 2011

Mrs Hawes
Headteacher
Saxmundham Primary School
Brook Farm Road
Saxmundham
IP17 1XQ

Dear Mrs Hawes

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Saxmundham Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 27 January 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I also wish to thank the members of the governing body, pupils and their parents and carers who shared their views with me about the school.

Since the last inspection there have been a number of changes to staffing. The deputy headteacher and senior teacher have taken over additional responsibility as phase leaders following the retirement of two senior leaders. The previously mixed year group of Reception and Year 1 has been replaced with a dedicated Reception class. The school is currently planning to increase its age range up to Year 5 from September 2011 and Year 6 in September 2012, in line with local authority reorganisation proposals. The school will also offer the opportunity for all children to start full time at the beginning of the Reception Year from September 2011.

As a result of the inspection on 25 November 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement and enjoyment of learning have remained good. In 2010, national performance data showed that attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 in writing and in all subjects taken together rose to significantly above average. In mathematics it was broadly average. By the end of Year 4 attainment remained above average in English and broadly average in mathematics. The school's data and observations of lessons demonstrate that current attainment

September 2010



remains above average in reading and writing but is slightly below average in mathematics. The school has analysed the reasons for this and is taking action with sharper use of assessment to raise attainment in mathematics. In the lessons observed, pupils made consistently good progress in learning in all subject areas, including mathematics, because teachers made good use of assessment to match tasks to different levels of ability and made good use of well-chosen resources including the interactive whiteboard to stimulate learning and enjoyment. As a result all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are achieving equally well.

There has been good improvement in provision for the Nursery and Reception classes since the last inspection. The balance of outdoor and indoor learning is now carefully planned with children having the opportunity to make free choices and move at will between these activities. There is a much sharper focus on the development of language and communication. This was seen, for example, when a small group of children chose to throw large dice to select nursery rhymes to say together, which they did with great enjoyment. Children's academic progress is now carefully recorded against developmental stages, and this information is used very effectively in setting new targets which build on prior learning and in planning activities that are matched carefully to individual needs. As a result all children in the Nursery and Reception classes are making good progress in all areas of learning.

The school is making satisfactory progress in developing community cohesion. It has carried out a full audit and identified where there is a shortfall in promoting understanding and appreciation of the religious, cultural and socio-economic aspects within national and international contexts. Planned activities have been included in the curriculum to promote this further, but the school has not yet fully implemented them or evaluated their impact on pupils' personal cultural development and contribution to the community.

Since the last inspection the school has made satisfactory progress in developing the use of self-evaluation, which in turn is building its capacity to improve satisfactorily. The school now focuses more rigorously on pupil outcomes, analysing the impact of teaching and the use of assessment on the pupils' learning and progress to set priorities for improvement. All senior leaders, who also have key subject responsibility for English and mathematics, now monitor teaching and learning more rigorously through sharply focused lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. They use the outcomes to set clear priorities and implement effective strategies for improvement. This has already been seen in writing, where improved standards have resulted from greater opportunities for writing across all subjects, and the consistently good teaching seen in lessons, which matches data from both the school and the School Improvement Partner. The governing body has built in a further meeting each term which focuses entirely on school improvement, holding the school to account for this. However, it has yet to develop a cycle for systematically monitoring school improvement through focused visits. This, together with the limited impact of the more focused use of assessment to raise standards in

mathematics and only satisfactory progress in developing community cohesion, means that the capacity of the school to further improve is satisfactory rather than good. The school is also developing its partnership with parents and carers to facilitate their greater involvement and further develop consultation and communication between home and school. Parents and carers highlighted this as a very positive feature in a discussion held during this inspection.

The local authority has provided satisfactory overall support for the school. The work of the School Improvement Partner has been a notable strength in helping the school to make more effective use of data in evaluating its work, and in developing greater challenge to drive through the areas for improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Declan McCarthy
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2009

- Develop a cycle of self-evaluation which focuses on the impact of actions on the pupils' learning, involves all those with a stake in the school and is used to focus improvement planning on clearly identified priorities.
- Focus all members of staff in the Nursery and Reception classes on extending the opportunity for children to take greater responsibility for their learning and develop their speaking skills more rapidly, planning carefully how learning can be linked more effectively between inside and outdoors, making greater use of information about pupils' academic targets and progress to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's actions.
- Use the school's understanding of the context in which it works to plan for community cohesion and evaluate the effectiveness of its implementation.