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Mr O Fordham
Amington Heath Community School
Quince
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Dear Mr Fordham

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Amington Heath Community School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 17 February 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the Chair of your Governing Body, the teachers and pupils who gave their time to meet with me.

Since the last inspection in October 2009 one teacher has retired. Because of falling rolls she has not been replaced and the separate Nursery and Reception classes have consequently been amalgamated into one Foundation class.

As a result of the inspection on 14 October 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.

Pupils' achievement is still satisfactory, but improving. The first area for improvement in the last report was to ensure that 65% of pupils throughout the school reach the expected levels. Current data show that this figure has now been achieved in reading and mathematics, but not yet in writing where around 50% are on track. The school is addressing this through the introduction of guided writing and the purchase of new schemes, as seen in Year 3. Attainment remains below average, but school is able to show that achievement for individual pupils has clearly improved over the past year. Many pupils are now making good progress from low starting points.



Teaching was good in the lessons observed in all age groups, supporting effective learning. Tracking is now carried out through the use of Assessing Pupil Progress materials in writing and mathematics, but not yet in reading. Individual pupil tracking systems have led to the identification of target groups in each class, although work is still developing on extending this tracking to every pupil and using software to demonstrate individual progress throughout the school from an initial baseline on entry. The school has moved towards a more thematic curriculum and there are now many opportunities for pupils to develop core skills in more ways. These include the use of computers, where facilities have been enhanced although the school still does not have computers in each classroom or school-wide networking.

The headteacher has successfully strengthened leadership at all levels. The deputy headteacher now has an important strategic role and the subject coordinators for English and mathematics play a central role in raising achievement. Effective and rigorous monitoring of teaching, planning and assessment is supporting teachers in raising the standards of teaching and learning. It enables leaders to identify areas for continued improvement such as the assessment of pupils' work, where there remains some inconsistency in implementing the agreed school policy.

The governing body has successfully enhanced the school's ability to promote community cohesion at all levels. For example, pupils talked enthusiastically about a recent visit to a mosque and about their developing understanding of other cultures and creeds.

Over the last year attendance has improved from 81% to 93%, although this figure remains low. Procedures for dealing with absence are now clear, although the school still does not engage enough with a small number of parents and carers who are hard to reach.

The local authority has provided effective support. The provision of consultants to support the raising of standards in English and mathematics which has had a direct impact on raising the quality of teaching. The clear evidence of rising achievement, the leaders' strategic focus on moving forward and the quality of teaching are central to the better ability to sustain improvement in the future.

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

Martyn Groucutt
Additional Inspector

Annex

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

- Ensure that at least 65% of pupils throughout the school reach the expected levels and make the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics each year.
- Ensure more of the teaching is good by:
 - the sharper and more effective use of assessment data when planning lessons
 - providing motivating activities that enable pupils to use their writing and computer skills in other subjects
 - more consistent use of resources and displays to aid learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels by:
 - ensuring good use is made of rigorous and detailed monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning
 - auditing and improving the provision for community cohesion in order to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of how others live.
- Improve attendance rates by better monitoring of absences and closer working with families.