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Friday 29 October 2010

Mr I Proud
Headteacher
Braunstone Community Primary School
Cort Crescent
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Dear Mr Proud

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Braunstone Community Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Thursday 28 October 2010, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also thank the Chair of the Governing Body, the local authority representative, and the group of pupils that I met.

Since the previous inspection, five teachers have joined the school and five have left. The school has been included in Leicester City Challenge since Autumn 2009. The numbers of pupils on roll has increased by 20% and the school is now oversubscribed. The proportion of pupils from minority heritage ethnic groups has continued to rise to well above the national average. The proportion of pupils arriving part way through a key stage, although still above average at 30%, has substantially reduced from the 70% at the time of the previous inspection.

As a result of the inspection on February 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 good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

The attainment of Year 6 pupils in national tests in 2009 was well below average. In 2010, Year 6 pupils gained better results. Overall they were still below the nationally expected levels, but were above the minimum floor target and the best in the school's history. Attainment at Key Stage 1 has also improved, but remains just below average. The school is not confident that historical information about Key Stage 1 performance is reliable, which coupled to very high pupil mobility, makes it unwise to give too much weight to the apparently weak overall progress data



published to date. There is some internal evidence that the majority of pupils are making at least the expected learning progress in Key Stage 2, with some impressive gains in the quality of writing.

The lessons I saw were securely satisfactory or good, which is better than the school's summer term internal review; no element of any of the lessons I saw gave cause for concern. There is consistency in the planning and delivery of lessons, which confirms an overall improvement in teaching quality. Teachers are confident that recent professional development is helpful in raising the quality of their teaching. The best learning occurred where pupils had the opportunity to work alone or in small groups, particularly when trying experiments. Very young pupils find this difficult, as they have yet to develop a strong sense of independence. Learning was more ordinary where pupils listened to the teacher, or waited their turn to contribute to a whole-class discussion.

The school has been the beneficiary of a number of initiatives designed to improve pupil outcomes, some from the local authority and others brokered by City Challenge. There have been a number of different consultants working with the school, and a number of different local authority partners. Teachers say training quality has been generally good, with a few exceptions. Unusually, the school has worked in partnership with a London primary school that itself is experienced in providing support for 'Keys to Success' schools in the London Challenge. This has involved exchanges of teachers and leaders, with extended training sessions in the school that has given time for teachers to reflect upon pedagogy and practise newly-taught skills. The big picture is of a school working well to address the point for improvement. However, the succession of different providers and partners has led to some inefficiency as new working relationships need to be repeatedly re-established. The London School partnership is building a good capacity within the school to understand, monitor, evaluate and internally develop teaching. There has also been a good impact from consultancy work to improve writing standards.

There are now good opportunities for pupils to learn from each others' varied cultural backgrounds, and to systematically learn about different cultures and countries. Each class has 'adopted' a country, researched its characteristics and then reported via assemblies to the whole school. Year 6 pupils could recount facts about all kinds of countries that they had learned through this interesting, explicit approach to developing multicultural awareness.

One continuing area of instability that is beyond the school's own control is the influx of pupils via managed moves. Additionally, pupils are admitted under appeal despite the year groups in question being full. This is creating large variations in year-group size that, in turn, compromise long-term planning and staffing arrangements, and risks the school running out of space. The repeated changes in local authority personnel who have been supporting the school has limited their impact. However, a key consistency has been the effective use by all parties of the intensifying support programme (ISP) that helps track individual children and ensures quick intervention.

should a child lag behind. Considerable resources have been available to provide one-to-one support for reading, a reading recovery programme, 'every child counts' and whole-staff training on the use of phonics to teach early reading. All these programmes have secured a good capacity for further rises in standards.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Cartwright".

Brian Cartwright
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Ensure that the recent improvement in standards and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics are consistent and accelerated in all classes.
- Build robustly on the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, so that teachers' ongoing training needs are quickly identified and addressed, in order to improve their practice.
- Give pupils more learning opportunities to discover and celebrate the diverse cultures within the school.