

19 November 2010

Mrs L Brammah  
Headteacher  
Pickering Community Infant and  
Nursery School,  
Ruffa Lane  
Pickering  
YO18 7AT

Dear Mrs Brammah

### **Ofsted 2010–11 best practice survey: school governance**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 4 November 2010 to look at school governance.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our publication about best practice in school governance. The publication will include case studies about individual schools. If Pickering Community Infant school is included as a case study, you will have an opportunity to comment before publication. Individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the identification of features of best practice included: a review of documentation, and meetings with a range of governors, staff and the clerk to the governing body.

### **Features of best practice**

- Governors are keen and highly motivated to do their best for the school and its pupils. They have a clear understanding of their role in challenging and supporting the work of the school.
- An audit of governors' skills has ensured that the experience, expertise and interest of governors are used to very good effect. For example, those with extensive buildings, health and safety or human resource experience make very good contributions to the school.
- The annual plan for all governing body meetings and committee meetings ensures that the work and development of governors is thorough and systematic. The two-year cycle of governor self-review has led to effective plans for the development of governance.
- Protocols for governors to visit the school on a formal basis help them to gain an accurate picture of the work of the school. Worthy of note is the 'governor of the month' scheme, where a governor is encouraged to get to know, in detail, the work of the school during a month.

- Governors have developed very good arrangements to manage and collect evidence for your annual performance review.
- Governors are provided with a wide range of information and reports; this includes pupils' progress data and information about the quality of teaching. Of particular note is the system of providing governors with a wide range of documents, discussion papers and policies for review through the internet.
- New governors state that they are made to feel very welcome and included; they value their induction, the openness of existing governors and the system of providing them with a mentor governor.

**Areas for development, which we discussed, included:**

- sharing, in addition to the current annual evaluations of pupils' progress and performance, even more of the termly pupil progress information with governors.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to further develop governance.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Amraz Ali**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**