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1 October 2010

Mrs Julie Parry
Headteacher
Prince Edward Primary School
City Road
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S12 2AA

Dear Mrs Parry

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Prince Edward Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 30 September 2010, for the time you gave to our telephone discussion and the on-site preparation visit, and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the staff and pupils for taking time to talk to me.

There has been a high turnover of staff since the last inspection in June 2009. The deputy headteacher was seconded to the school from the local authority from September 2009. Some key permanent appointments have been made since Easter 2010. Among these include an assistant headteacher with responsibility for Key Stage 1, a Key Stage 2 coordinator, an Early Years Foundation Stage leader and a special educational needs coordinator. The school still does not have a substantive headteacher. The lead headteacher, appointed as an interim measure by the local authority just prior to the last inspection remains in post. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has risen significantly and is currently over 50%. More pupils who speak English as an additional language have joined the school.

As a result of the inspection on 16 and 17 June 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.

September 2010



Attainment remains low at the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2 but it is improving. The outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage increased significantly in 2010 due to the improved provision. The percentage of children attaining the nationally expected levels for the end of Reception in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy improved from 17% in 2009 to 53% in 2010. There has been a steady improvement in attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. The unvalidated test results for the end of Key Stage 2 in 2010 indicate improvement in reading and mathematics but a decline in writing. The results in writing were disappointing and pupils did not perform as well as the school expected them to in the writing test. As a result, the overall attainment in English was not as good as in the 2009 national tests but better than at the last inspection. However, the analysis of school data indicates that the cohort made better than expected progress from the end of Key Stage 1. The analysis of school data also indicates that pupils' progress is accelerating across the school with substantial gains being made. As a result, there is an increase in the number of pupils attaining the standards expected for their age and achievement is improving.

Lesson observations during the inspection indicate that the quality of teaching is improving and agree with the school's own evaluations. Pupils appreciate that a more stable staff team is bringing a better continuity to their learning. The move away from setting across the school means that teachers are more accountable for the progress of pupils in their classes. Pupils say, 'This move has led to more time for learning and improvements in behaviour'. Staff are increasingly aware of the levels pupils are working at and are more confident in planning work which matches their ability. Some recent developments are having good effect on classroom practice and bringing an increased focus on learning. For example, learning objectives are now shared with pupils along with the success criteria for assessing how well pupils are doing. Relationships and behaviour management were positive features in all the lessons observed. In the best lessons teachers ensure learning moves on at a good pace and questions are used well to challenge pupils' thinking. In some lessons the pace of learning slows because teachers do not always circulate enough to ensure that those pupils working independently fully understand the task or make sufficient progress. The contribution from teaching assistants varies. Some provide effective support and move pupils' learning on well but some provide too much direction which inhibits the development of independent learning skills. This also makes it difficult for the teachers to be able to assess pupils' achievements accurately.

The quality of teachers' marking has improved and is more consistent in providing the next steps in learning. This has been achieved by revisiting the policy and checking the marking through regular scrutiny of pupils' books. Pupils spoken to during the inspection reported that, 'Marking has improved big time, particularly in the way we have more time to respond to the teachers' comments to improve our

work'. Pupils are clearer about the levels they are working at and the next steps they need to take to move up a level.

The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has steered the school firmly through a period of significant turbulence in staffing. She continues to communicate a powerful sense of direction to staff and the drive for improvement. The school's capacity to sustain improvements is being strengthened by other staff taking on leadership responsibilities. The increase in shared leadership across the school is contributing to the growing consistency in good teaching, pupils' accelerating progress and the reduction in the number of pupils with persistent absence. Self-evaluation is accurate, as it was at the last inspection, and is increasingly robust. More staff are contributing to monitoring the school's performance and increasing their effectiveness in evaluating and leading school improvement. Senior leaders use the detailed information about pupils' progress more effectively to make teachers aware of the impact of their teaching. Pupil progress meetings are more frequent and have increased the accountability of the teachers. The meetings result in consideration of what action is to be taken to meet the needs of individuals, especially those falling behind. The school has received effective support from the local authority and is mindful that it will need strategic support in securing a substantive headteacher and deputy headteacher.

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

Brenda McIntosh
Additional inspector

Annex

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

- Increase the number of pupils reaching the nationally expected standards for their age.
- Move more teaching to a good quality, by developing teachers' understanding of how pupils learn in different subjects, so they plan more effectively to accelerate progress.
- Ensure pupils reflect and act on their teachers' guidance to help them move forward in their learning.
- Ensure new leaders and staff at all levels are effective in evaluating and leading the improvement of the school.