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Headteacher  
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Somerfords' Walter Powell VA C  
of E Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Rowe

**Ofsted 2010–11 survey inspection programme: leadership of more than one school**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 9 and 10 February 2011 to look at the leadership of the federation. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils, staff, parents, governors and local authority representative who also gave up their time and made a valuable contribution to the visit.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: meetings with leaders, staff, governors, parents, local authority representative and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and visits to lessons.

The effectiveness of the federation leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement is good.

**Context**

The federation of Seagry and Somerfords' Walter Powell Primary Schools consists of Seagry Church of England Primary School and Somerfords' Walter Powell Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School. The schools were federated in September 2008 and are separated by a distance of 1.8 miles. Both schools have privately operated pre schools on the school site.

## **Outcomes**

- Levels of attainment by the end of Key stage 2 are above average across the federation. Pupils' progress has improved significantly in Somerfords' Walter Powell School since federation. A number of pupils are now making outstanding progress and developing high levels of understanding particularly in mathematics. They are able to talk with confidence about their learning and enjoy school a great deal.
- Teachers' assessments are now accurate and used effectively to monitor the progress of all pupils across the federation. The federation assessment information demonstrates the increasing impact that both schools are having on outcomes for pupils. The federation is aware that further work is needed to ensure writing skills develop further and that all pupils make at least good progress overall.
- Teachers know pupils well and this helps to ensure that pupils feel safe and well cared for. Behaviour of pupils now contributes to the positive, friendly and happy learning ethos in the schools.
- Pupils' attendance has improved further since federation and is high overall across the federation. A very small number of pupils do not achieve as much because their attendance is not good enough, but the school is successful in working with parents, carers and other partners where attendance is an issue.

## **Provision**

- The quality of teaching across the federation has risen as a result of a clear focus by leaders on improving teaching, particularly in Somerfords' Walter Powell School. Teachers are now very clear about strengths and areas that they would like to improve further and have a passion and commitment to make things even better for pupils. There has been a great deal of sharing of good practice and the two schools are now mutually supportive of developments.
- Teachers are now using more diagnostic assessment of learning and are beginning to use this to inform planning and develop learning opportunities that are more appropriate for each individual. This is not yet consistent, however, and some tasks engage but do not challenge pupils sufficiently.
- The curriculum has improved because there is now a clear skills-based approach that suits pupils and the school circumstances and ethos well. The collaboration between teachers in the two schools means that activities are more relevant and interesting for pupils.
- Resources and trips are now better managed and, as a result, a greater variety of opportunities are accessible to pupils across the federation. Modern languages and art are particularly enjoyed by pupils as the federation has been able to ensure that specialists can lead learning with greater impact. Pupils are able to compete in more local sports competitions as they are able to form teams, for example in netball and football, across the federation.

- The quality of care, guidance and support has improved with a more consistent approach to systems and procedures across the federation.

### **Leadership and management**

- The leadership of the federation has clear direction and ambition. You and the assistant headteachers are supported by a committed and experienced governing body. There is a strong sense of teamwork among staff in the federation and a distinct character is clear in each school. Morale is high and there is a passion for developing still further the opportunities brought about through federation. Somerfords' Walter Powell School is now thriving after a period of instability.
- The sound progress monitoring systems used in Seagry School are now also well established in Somerfords' Walter Powell School. The federation's analysis of performance has become more sophisticated and a wider range of indicators are beginning to be used to establish impact on outcomes for pupils.
- Good communication has ensured that parents and staff are aware of the security that the federation offers and are reassured about the clear identity within each school. Parents felt that the federation was bringing increasing benefits, had developed very well so far, and that further opportunities lay ahead.
- Effective collaboration between staff in each school has developed teachers' and subject leaders' skills. Induction of new teachers and support staff has also been enhanced by the federation ensuring that all staff have the opportunity to contribute to developments.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- building on good and outstanding practice to develop further the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - ensuring that all teachers make full use of diagnostic assessments to plan increasingly challenging learning opportunities
  - developing a deeper analysis of the impact of interventions and learning opportunities.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop the leadership of the federation.

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. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Paul Scott**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**