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4 March 2011

Mrs D Wright
Acting Headteacher
St Martin's CofE Junior Infant and Nursery School
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Dear Mrs Wright

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of St Martin's CofE Junior Infant and Nursery School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 3 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please extend my thanks to the Chair of the Governing Body for meeting with me.

Since the previous inspection the governing body has recruited an additional teacher to enable a single-aged class structure to be implemented throughout the school from September 2010. In January 2011, a new acting deputy headteacher was appointed on a two-term secondment.

As a result of the inspection on 24–25 November 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 outstanding progress in making improvements and outstanding progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils' attainment is improving rapidly as seen in the results of the national tests for Year 6 in 2010 which were above average in English and mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 increased significantly. Inspection evidence shows that this improvement is being sustained. School data, recording pupils' attainment in the current academic year, show standards are much improved since the last inspection. This is confirmed by the work in pupils' books and during lesson observations. Pupils are making much improved progress throughout the school. The Year 6 national test results represent significant improvement in the rate of pupils' progress and the school's data, work in books and lesson observations all confirm this. Taken together, the evidence demonstrates exceptional improvement in pupils' achievement.

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The acting headteacher's dynamic leadership has ensured excellent improvement to all of the issues raised at the last inspection. Aided by an increasingly effective governing body, and strongly supported by a staff team willing to embrace change, she has quickly improved the quality of teaching and learning. In particular, the use of assessment information has been improved by developing a robust system to track pupils' progress. Teachers' use of this data now ensures that lessons are planned which take full account of pupils' starting points. Expectations of pupils' learning are much higher, including for the most able. Targets for pupils' attainment have been increased. Pupils who spoke to the inspector said that mathematics lessons are fun and interesting because the teachers provide many opportunities for them to investigate and solve problems. A high proportion of the lessons seen during the inspection contained many practical activities which encouraged pupils to learn by exploring and discussing their ideas with each other. The result of these improvements to teaching and learning are clearly seen in the higher level of pupils' attainment in mathematics.

A key feature of the school's rapid improvement is the development of a wide range of support and intervention strategies for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teaching assistants provide very good guidance for pupils. Staff plan together in teams; adults know pupils' needs very well and this enables well-matched programmes of support to be offered. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage a strong focus is given to developing children's speaking and listening skills. Letters and sounds are taught regularly so that children can practise and improve their basic skills. Throughout the school, pupils' learning is boosted through targeted teaching in small groups, such as in the Year 5 springboard mathematics programme. Teachers give freely of their time to provide one-to-one tuition after school. After school revision classes are offered to Year 6 pupils, as well as holiday sessions to boost their progress further.

Leaders are making more effective use of the external advice and support available to them. For example, members of the governing body have engaged in training to increase their knowledge and understanding of data. As a result, they have improved their analysis of pupils' progress and hold school leaders more closely to account. Local authority consultants provide effective guidance to leaders. This is seen in the improved provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the quality of teaching and learning, especially in mathematics. The School Improvement Partner offers robust scrutiny of the school's performance and the outcomes of this are acted upon decisively by the senior leaders.

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

Mr John Coleman
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 24–25 November 2009

- Raise standards in mathematics to at least the level of those being achieved in English.
- Increase the rate of pupils' progress throughout the school by:
 - raising the level of challenge for all pupils, especially those who are more able
 - making more cross-curricular links between numeracy and other subjects
 - ensuring that adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage take every opportunity to develop children's communication skills.
- Improve the use of information gained from assessing and tracking pupils' progress to:
 - provide an accurate foundation on which to build the school's self-evaluation and action planning
 - plan lessons throughout the whole school so that they consistently provide suitable levels of challenge for pupils of different abilities.