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24 March 2011

Mrs S Sadler
Headteacher
Clayton Brook Primary School
Great Greens Lane
Bamber Bridge
Preston
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Dear Mrs Sadler,

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Clayton Brook Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 23 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to talk with me and to the Chair of the Governing Body and staff for their time and courtesy.

Since the last inspection there have been considerable changes to the staffing including, the appointment of a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and four new class teachers. A 12-month secondment of an assistant headteacher is also in place. There is a newly formed leadership team and all of the teaching staff are new to the age groups they are teaching.

As a result of the inspection on 16 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Results of the 2010 Key Stage 2 national assessments show an improvement from the previous year in English and mathematics. More pupils met age-related expectations than in previous years and the number of pupils reaching the higher level also increased in English. Attainment in 2010 at the end of Year 2 declined in writing and mathematics, although some gains can be seen in reading. No pupils achieved the higher level of attainment in any subject. Furthermore, current predictions in Year 2 show too few pupils are on track to reach age-related expectations. The school acknowledges more needs to be done to raise attainment and improve rates of progress. The headteacher holds pupil progress meetings with class teachers, where progress made by all pupils is monitored and analysed. Underperformance is now identified and interventions are put in place to help those pupils

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catch up. When children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage they have knowledge and skills lower than expected for their age. Satisfactory progress is made, although progress varies, with identified weaknesses in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. During Key Stage 1 and 2, progress is monitored and current data held by the school indicate more pupils are on track to reach age-related expectations. Progress is stronger in reading and mathematics, although strategies have been put in place to improve writing across the school. These procedures have not yet paid dividends. Current data, however, show that all year groups have made at least expected progress since the beginning of the academic year in reading, writing and mathematics.

The school has focused on developing independent writing and pupils report they write more frequently. The introduction of marking ladders ensures a greater awareness of success criteria for pupils. In the best lessons seen, these are referred to and reference is made to their relevance. Professional development for staff has focused on developing pupils' numeracy skills and some gains can be seen, for example, in the accelerated progress made in Year 6 in mathematics. The governing body is more involved in monitoring the levels of achievement through the establishment of the 'Raising Achievement Committee.'

The headteacher judges that teaching and learning have improved and effective links have been made with the local authority to develop and promote this work. Assessment information is used to greater effect by leaders and teachers to ensure pupils' needs are better met. Pupils report that activities set are 'just right!' During the inspection the inspector saw some effective deployment of teaching assistants, where they provided good support to pupils. However, this is not always the case and, in some instances, additional adults in lessons were less effective.

Curriculum development has been met with enthusiasm by pupils who report 'lessons are fun.' Whole-school topics have been introduced and pupils are able to guide their own learning by deciding on what they want to find out about. The use of targets has developed. Individual targets are set for writing and mathematics, while reading targets are set for groups of pupils. The older pupils are aware of the level they are working at and most pupils can articulate what they need to do to improve. Marking of pupils' work generally supports pupils' next steps in their learning, but this remains inconsistent across year groups and subjects. A monitoring cycle to evaluate teaching and learning has been established by the new leadership team, which includes lesson observations, book scrutiny and monitoring of teachers' planning.

The local authority is working closely with the school. The headteacher knows what needs to be developed and is determined to drive forward improvements; plans of which are supported by the local authority. Consultants have provided training and professional development which have been well received. The school is also working closely with a local cluster of schools on agreed areas of improvement.

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

Mrs Jane Millward
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 16 November 2009

- Accelerate pupils' progress, especially in writing and mathematics by:
 - raising standards in independent writing
 - ensuring pupils become more confident in using their numeracy skills.

- Increase the proportion of consistently good teaching across the school by;
 - using assessment information more effectively to meet the needs of all pupils
 - ensuring the pace and challenge in lessons sustains pupils' interests.