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8 October 2010

Miss Heng
Hall Green Primary School
Westminster Road
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Dear Miss Heng

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Hall Green Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Thursday 7 October 2010, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass my thanks on to your senior leadership team for the time they gave to meeting with me.

Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils on roll has increased significantly and there has been an increase in the number of teaching staff. Four new teachers have been appointed this term. There has also been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

As a result of the inspection on 5 May 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 national assessments for pupils in Year 6 showed an improvement in attainment in 2009 which has been sustained in 2010. In 2010 there was an increase in the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics, although the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 dipped. Although attainment is rising, it remains below average. National assessment data

show that the progress pupils made from Year 2 to Year 6 show a trend of improvement from 2008 to 2010. The unvalidated 2010 figures indicate that progress is likely to be good for this cohort of pupils. Work seen in lessons and pupils' books indicates that pupils are making at least satisfactory, and frequently good progress. However, there is inconsistency through the school because teachers are not all using assessment well enough to plan learning activities which meet the pupils' individual needs. This is particularly so in mathematics because, on occasions, too little account is taken of gaps in pupils' calculation skills.

You have been very successful in establishing a consistency in classroom organisation and routines. As a result, pupils throughout the school benefit from bright and stimulating displays which support their learning. Lessons follow a common format and pupils are very clear about what they are expected to learn in each lesson. Teachers' expectations are high and most lessons now proceed at a brisk pace. Pupils' good attitudes are reflected in their well-developed independent learning skills. This is complemented by very effective peer support systems where pupils throughout the school help each other with their work when they can. These developments have led to an improvement in the overall quality of teaching and the progress the pupils are making.

Work to improve the consistency of academic advice given to pupils has been less effective. Pupils have clear targets in their books and success criteria matched to their ability in each lesson. You have put in place clear expectations about how work should be marked. Teachers follow this well to inform pupils about how well they have done. However, questions and comments to extend pupils' learning further are not used consistently well throughout the school. Questions are occasionally written in pupils' books, but these are not always answered. Guidance on how pupils can improve their work further is limited. You are aware that teachers' comments do not always model good handwriting and grammar.

You have taken effective action to address the shortcomings in subject leadership. You quickly recognised that attempting to develop the existing senior leadership team was not successful. Consequently, you restructured the leadership of the school as quickly as you reasonably could. Members of the new team took up their posts at the start of this term and they have all received appropriate professional development. They have quickly become established as a cohesive team focused on improving learning and progress in their subject areas. They have begun to undertake an appropriate range of monitoring and evaluation activities including lesson observations and scrutinies of pupils' work. The subject leaders are developing a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further. They have already been successful in addressing some of these issues through initiatives to develop reading, writing and the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. The success of this work is reflected in the improvements to teaching and the increased rates of progress made by the pupils. Pupil progress meetings have been used successfully to target support leading to accelerated progress for identified pupils.

The improvements that the school has made and the recent strengthening of the senior leadership team demonstrate that the school has made satisfactory progress in strengthening its own capacity to improve. The local authority has provided important financial support for the training of subject leaders as well as some helpful professional development through joint lesson observations with the 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

Mark Mumby
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise standards, especially in English and mathematics, by ensuring pupils are challenged well in lessons so they make better progress.
- Improve the consistency of academic advice given to pupils so they can better understand how they can improve their work.
- Ensure subject leaders take full responsibility for standards and improvements to secure consistently good progress in the areas for which they are accountable.