

13 Apr 2011

Mr N J Long
Headteacher
Church Drive Primary School
Church Drive
Port Sunlight
Wirral
Merseyside
CH62 5EF

Dear Mr Long,

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Church Drive Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 12 April 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 the members of the governing body and staff for their time and courtesy.

Since the last inspection, the governing body has appointed an additional three teaching assistants.

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 inadequate progress in making improvements and inadequate progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Results of the national assessments and tests in 2010 indicate that attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is declining and is significantly lower than expected nationally. Boys perform less well than girls. The rate of progress made by pupils has declined over time to below levels evident at the time of the previous inspection. The school has however implemented a new tracking system which shows attainment and progress for all pupils. This current data, held by the school, indicates that there has been some improvement in rates of pupil progress, most noticeably in Year 2 and Year 6. In addition, the headteacher is beginning to monitor progress more accurately through pupil progress meetings, where underperformance is more readily identified and better targeted support is provided to help pupils 'catch up.' As this process is in its infancy, it is too early to determine its effectiveness, although the process is beginning to ensure that teachers are held more accountable for the progress made by pupils.

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Monitoring and evaluation procedures are implemented by senior leaders in school. There is a timetable in place which maps monitoring activities on a monthly basis. This includes the monitoring of teachers' planning, checking on pupils' progress through book scrutinies, conducting learning walks and lesson observations. However, this work has not yet led to discernable improvements in outcomes for pupils. The school development plan is based on five key areas, including the three areas for improvement identified in the inspection report, as well as developing writing and improving mathematics. However, analysis of data has not yet supported the identification of some necessary actions, for example, improving the achievement of boys. There remains a lack of clarity as to how actions will be implemented and current monitoring of the school's development plan lacks the rigour required to bring about improvements. Success criteria and milestones to measure progress have not yet been fully identified and the governing body has had little involvement in measuring the success of the plan. Lesson observations are carried out by the senior leadership team on a formal and informal basis. Informal lesson observations are not recorded and hence do not yet secure improvement. Formal evaluations made by leaders cover many aspects of teaching and learning, including the use of technology to support learning, pupils' behaviour and lesson planning. However, not enough priority is focused on the attainment or progress made by pupils during the sessions observed.

The school's own monitoring of lessons indicates an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Lesson observations during the inspection showed consistent collaboration by pupils to enhance learning. The role of additional adults has been a focus for the school, and examples were seen where they provided effective support. In some lessons, however, there were instances where pace and challenge slipped and the more able are not challenged as well as they might. Marking of pupils' work in some cases enables pupils to move on quickly with their learning and they are guided to their next steps in order to make progress. However, this is not consistently used and there are examples where marking simply affirms the efforts made by pupils and in some cases pieces of work remain unmarked.

Although the governing body demonstrate a commitment to the school and are more aware of its overall strengths and weaknesses there remains work to be done in order to fully hold the school to account. They now receive more detailed information from the headteacher about the school's performance and are more aware of the issues facing the school on a day-to-day basis. However, they are still not fully holding the school to account. Whilst they monitor the actions of the school they are not yet sufficiently focused on the impact of the actions. The governing body acknowledge that more needs to be done to record progress towards bringing about improvement.

Pupils' understanding of life in modern British society is developing. More widely, the school has forged links with a school in Uganda and raises money to support the provision of education for its pupils. Pupils regularly communicate through writing letters to each other. Dialogue by pupils in the two schools exists through regular letter writing. Their knowledge of other cultures has been improved through the support of a volunteer teacher who

regularly teaches Chinese art, drama, music and Mandarin. Pupils speak enthusiastically about these activities and are able to talk about life in China.

The local authority provides a range of support for the school, including involvement in a writing project and mathematics project. Training has focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning and this has been well received. Two reviews of mathematics have taken place where the local authority has monitored the quality of provision across the school. However there is insufficient evidence to show how this support has yet improved outcomes for pupils.

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 16 November 2009

- Improve the effectiveness of leaders' and managers' monitoring and evaluation by:
 - ensuring the school development plan is more sharply focused on the key areas for improvement and indicates how these will be implemented and monitored over time
 - making sure that the monitoring of teaching is more sharply focused on improving learning outcomes.
- Enable governors to more effectively hold the school to account by:
 - providing them with more detailed information in relation to the school's performance in key areas
 - ensuring that procedures relating to the recording of progress towards bringing about improvement are more formally documented.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the issues relating to living in a British multicultural society by:
 - providing greater opportunities for them to engage with people from a wider range of cultures more regularly.