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18 July 2011

Mrs S Howard
Headteacher
Rawtenstall St Paul's Constable Lee Church of England Primary School
Hollin Lane
Rawtenstall
Rossendale
Lancashire
BB4 8HT

Dear Mrs Howard,

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Rawtenstall St Paul's Constable Lee Church of England Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 15 July 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I am also grateful to the eight pupils, two governors and eight parents who met with me, and to the local authority adviser who spoke with me on the telephone.

Since the previous inspection there have been a number of changes in staffing including, to cover maternity leave, the appointment of an associate headteacher and, since March 2011, of an acting assistant headteacher. Two classes are currently taught by staff on temporary contracts.

As a result of the inspection in February 2010, 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 good progress in making improvements and outstanding progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Key to the improvements made has been the strength of leadership provided by the headteacher. She has instilled a great sense of confidence in the school. Her chief priority of improving the achievement of the pupils has been relentless. Her vision has been articulated clearly and is understood and shared throughout the school. Leadership is now more widely distributed across the school and the important responsibility of accountability for the learning and development of pupils has been willingly grasped by the staff and the governing body. The acceptance of accountability has been particularly important this year given the headteacher's two-term maternity leave absence. During this time, because of the strong systems in place and good use of external support to improve teaching, the associate headteacher, leaders and the governing body were able to keep the school on track. Parents

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

and carers spoken with during this monitoring inspection were very positive about the leadership of the substantive headteacher, the work of the associate headteacher and the way the school helps their children to become well-rounded individuals. Their confidence is very well placed.

The organisation of pupils into mixed-aged learning pods, reported on positively by inspectors in February 2010, continues to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. This impact is evident in the provisional results of the 2011 Key Stage 2 national tests in which there has been a leap forward in pupils' attainment. The improvement shown in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics demonstrates the success of strategies put in place to challenge pupils to do even better in their learning. Overall, these standards highlight improvements in the rates of progress pupils are making. The school is not complacent though and leaders are already looking at ways in which pupils' learning can be accelerated beyond that expected as the norm. It is in a very strong position to achieve success in this because the meticulous records and accurate assessments identified in February 2010 continue to be used well.

There have been good improvements in the quality of teaching and in implementing a theme-based curriculum. More lessons are good and outstanding. In such lessons, questioning and prompting by adults encourages pupils to solve problems themselves and collaboratively. Activities planned are not only matched well to pupils' abilities, they also provide good levels of challenge. Two examples illustrate this. First, in a mathematics lesson with older pupils, they successfully tackled problems, such as $-2(3b + 4)$. Second, in an English lesson with pupils from Years 4 and 5, the pupils correctly identified strengths and errors in each other's work as they created Haiku poems on the theme of change. The theme-based curriculum is engaging pupils well in their learning: they enjoy the variety and ability to link learning in one subject to another. Good attention is given to the key aspects of English, mathematics and science. The benefits of this are seen particularly in the improving standards of writing across the school; for example, in pupils' written work about Odysseus and the Cyclops, prayers for the earthquake and tsunami survivors in Japan, and information written by younger children about puffer fish and other sea creatures.

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 Mark Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2010

- Accelerate achievement and improve attainment in English, mathematics and particularly science, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers consistently use accurate assessment information to set challenging tasks, which meet the learning needs of individual pupils in every lesson
 - ensuring that leaders, at every level throughout the school, from headteacher to class teacher, check more closely on, and take responsibility for, the learning and progress pupils are making in lessons
 - ensuring that the recent positive changes to the curriculum are fully and completely implemented.