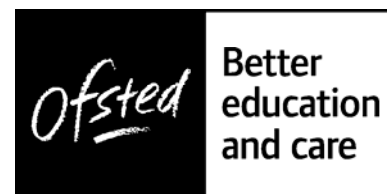


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12 July 2005

Mrs A Grief
Headteacher
Long Sutton Primary School
Dick Turpin Way
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Dear Mrs Grief

Implementation of Long Sutton Primary School's Action Plan

Following my visit to your school on 29 and 30 June 2005, I write to confirm the findings and to notify you of the outcomes.

As you know, the inspection was part of a policy involving a broader series of visits by HMI and Additional Inspectors to check on the development and improvement of schools which have been designated by their section 10 inspection as having serious weaknesses. You will recall that the focus of the inspection was to assess: the quality of the action plan; the pupils' standards of attainment and their progress; the quality of education provided; the leadership and management of the school; the pupils' attitudes and behaviour; and the progress that has been made in implementing the action plan and removing the causes of the serious weaknesses.

During the visit I inspected 11 lessons or part lessons; attended a registration period and an assembly; scrutinised a wide range of documentation provided by the school; and held discussions with you and nominated staff on the areas for improvement identified in the section 10 inspection. I also examined a range of pupils' work and spoke informally with other staff and pupils.

On the basis of the evidence gathered during the visit, I made the following observations to you, the chair of governors and a representative from the LEA.

The 2005 national test and teacher assessment results in Year 2 show an improvement since the previous year. The improvement is greatest in writing and mathematics with an overall increase in the proportion of pupils gaining the expected level in reading. These improvements reflect the impact of improvements in teaching in Year 1 and 2 since the last inspection. Overall standards in Year 6 in the 2004 national tests were below average in English and average in mathematics and science compared to similar schools. The unvalidated data for the 2005

national tests shows an improvement in English and science compared to the results last year, but a slight fall in mathematics. Based on the pupils' attainment when they start the school, this shows less underachievement last year in English. The headteacher has tackled raising achievement well.

The quality of teaching and learning was good in three lessons and satisfactory in eight. Features of the good teaching included: the good and sometimes very good attitudes to learning and the high levels of enthusiasm and interest shown by pupils; efficient and effective deployment of support staff; detailed planning in which the needs of pupils with the full range of abilities in the class were catered for; opportunities to take responsibility for learning; and worthwhile independent activities. Demonstrations, modelling and explanations were clear and effective and helped pupils learn new skills in whole class introductory sessions. For example, when pupils in Year 2 were helped to understand how to solve simple division problems. Classrooms displays are vibrant and provide a good stimuli and resource for learning for pupils in most classes.

Assessment procedures have been improved. Whole school targets in handwriting are boldly displayed and referred to in the short, daily handwriting session. Assessment data is collated in class assessment files and provides an overview of individual pupils' progress. There is some variability in the completion of this information and the accessibility of it for teachers. Some of the information is stored centrally to be available for the assistant headteachers but is not kept up-to-date in the teachers' assessment files. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but reference to specific targets for improvement is less evident. The links between formative assessment and marking is unclear.

Provision for the pupils who have special educational needs has improved. A recent review of individual education plans has resulted in fewer, more manageable targets being set. The whole school evaluation of the recent non-statutory tests has identified those pupils making insufficient progress in literacy and numeracy. A range of effective intervention strategies such as additional literacy support, further literacy support and springboard have been put in place. As a result, these pupils are making good progress and are well supported by teaching assistants.

Overall, however, there was too much teaching that was only satisfactory. Several teachers with access to whiteboard technology failed to make use of this to enrich their teaching and the pupils' learning. Where pupils were expected to take part in whole class sessions, their learning was more assured, **although on occasions, teachers' expectations were not high enough.**

The attitudes and behaviour of pupils throughout the school are very good. Pupils are mature and take responsibility very well in lessons from the nursery through to Year 6. Pupils were eager to air their views and opinions on matters of immediate interest such as the argument for and against afternoon playtime in Year 5 and to describe the sights of Hunstanton following a visit. Behaviour in lessons is very good: pupils are very courteous and polite around school.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has taken effective action to bring about improvements to teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 while ensuring that staff absence minimised disruption to teaching in Years 3 to 6. The internal appointment of two assistant headteachers, each with major responsibilities, is having a good impact on eliminating major weaknesses in the provision for special educational needs and the quality of education throughout the school. The headteacher has not shirked from tackling some difficult staffing situations, while maintaining the momentum for change in many aspects of teaching and learning, assessment and planning. Governors are well informed and attend all the meetings of the core group of personnel involved in the school's improvement. The headteacher has worked well to challenge the governors and bring about their acceptance of the need to change some aspects of the school's procedures.

The action plan contains an informative timeline of actions to date and their outcomes. The success criteria are specific and measurable for each area for improvement and there is a clear distinction between monitoring and evaluation. Progress on the action plan is rigorously checked by the headteacher. The self-evaluation completed in preparation for this monitoring visit provided a detailed, quantified assessment of progress. The next steps were clearly and honestly stated, including a revised action plan for improvements in the provision for pupils with special educational needs resulting from the resignation of the co-ordinator in recent weeks. Continued improvement is partly dependent on the actions of the two senior teachers, both of whom already have major responsibilities for which they have release time allocated. The action plan is good.

The LEA quickly recognised the competence and capability of the headteacher in being able to bring about sustained improvements in a relatively short time scale. This is acknowledged in the most recent report from the school's improvement officer. A timetabled grid shows the extent of the LEA's support, particularly in respect of support for literacy, numeracy, and special educational needs and the preparation for this visit. Meetings are held regularly to evaluate the school's progress. The LEA has provided a sound level of support.

Actions taken to address the areas for improvement

1: improve teaching, assessment and pupil standards and achievement in Key Stage 1

Progress is good.

2: improve the management of the provision and progress made by pupils with special educational needs

Progress is good.

Much time and effort has been put into supporting the co-ordinator who has only very recently resigned her position. The headteacher has acted swiftly to appoint an experienced teacher into this role and a programme of improvement is in place, with much due to start early next term. A whole school review of the attainment of all pupils has taken place and used to identify those pupils making limited progress. A series of support programmes is in place to remedy literacy and numeracy weaknesses through Wave 2 and 3 intervention programmes.

Good progress has been made in implementing the action plan and removing the causes of the school's serious weaknesses.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Education and Cultural Services for Lincolnshire. This letter will also be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

ROSEMARY RODGER
Additional Inspector

cc: chair of governors
LEA