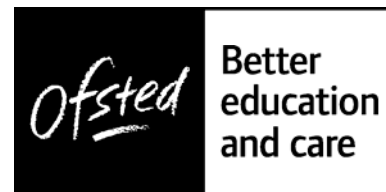


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1 July 2005

Mr R Hornsby
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hornsby

Implementation of Adderley Primary School's Action Plan

Following the visit of Sue Morris-King HMI, Sue Harrison HMI, Cathie Munt HMI and Anne Pitt HMI to your school on 22 and 23 June 2005, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings which are recorded in the attached note.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures. The focus of the inspection was to assess: 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.

The school has made good progress since the last monitoring inspection and good progress overall since being subject to special measures.

I am copying this letter and the note of the inspection findings to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Education for Birmingham. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Reid
Head of Institutional Inspections and Frameworks Division

IMPLEMENTATION OF ADDERLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL'S ACTION PLAN

Findings of the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures

The governing body has appointed a substantive headteacher. He will take up his post in September 2005.

During the visit 23 lessons or parts of lessons, two registration sessions and two assemblies were inspected. Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, the chair of governors, members of the leadership team, other key staff, representatives from the LEA and the headteacher designate. Informal discussions were held with other members of staff and with pupils and samples of work were examined. A range of documents was scrutinised. Using this evidence, HMI made the following observations to the acting headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the chair of the governing body, a representative from the LEA and the headteacher designate.

Overall, standards in lessons remain below those found in many primary schools. However, there has been a marked improvement in the pupils' progress over time. In lessons the pupils' progress was at least satisfactory in 17 out of 23 lessons, including ten in which it was good or better. The pupils made accelerated progress in their learning when the teaching met their needs fully. The use of paired pupil discussions is beginning to have a positive impact on the pupils' ability to articulate their thinking.

The senior leadership team has paid suitably robust and rigorous attention to attaining good quality, consistent lesson structures. Almost all of the staff are using these structures; some are using them very effectively. The lessons observed during this monitoring inspection indicated that many of the teachers are making good use of the training and support which they have been given by the LEA and by the school's senior staff.

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 17 out of 23 lessons, including 11 in which it was good or was very good. In the most successful lessons, the pupils were meaningfully engaged in their learning. Paired talk was used effectively to enable the pupils to develop their ideas and understanding. The teachers had used their knowledge of the pupils' current levels of development to set tasks which were well matched to the needs of different groups and individuals. The teachers modelled spoken and written language to good effect. Their explanations were clear and questioning was used well to clarify, extend and check the pupils' understanding. The teachers referred frequently and appropriately to the learning objective, and the success criteria were well-used to check the pupils' learning. Judicious written and oral feedback was used to encourage the pupils and to promote good progress.

Even where teaching was less effective, there were strengths in the lesson structure and in the range of strategies which were used by the teachers.

However, in these lessons there was a mismatch between the planned activities and the pupils' learning needs. Consequently the pupils' learning was compromised and their progress was limited.

The pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour in lessons continue to be generally positive. Most teachers are implementing the school's behaviour management strategies effectively and the majority of pupils understand the expectations. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour were satisfactory or better in 18 out of 23 lessons and good or very good in over half. In the lessons that were well structured to meet the pupils' learning needs, they showed enthusiasm for learning and a positive attitude to their work. They were keen to contribute ideas and to ask questions which extended their knowledge and skills. In the satisfactory lessons, the pupils were reasonably well behaved and carried out tasks as required but did not demonstrate the same level of interest and enthusiasm. In a few lessons, a minority of the pupils did not fully co-operate and were not sufficiently engaged in the lesson.

Outside lessons, the pupils' behaviour was good. They moved around the school in an orderly way and were polite and well-mannered. At assembly times, they came into the hall quietly, listened well and participated appropriately. They behaved well during breaks, including when they were queuing for lunch on a very hot day. In the playground they were generally co-operative with each other. Overall, the pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved significantly since the section 10 inspection.

Attendance for the summer term 2005 is 93.28 per cent. This is below the national average, however it is an improvement since the previous monitoring inspection. The school has implemented a wide range of appropriate strategies to encourage pupils to attend. There have been no exclusions since the previous visit.

The school council provides the pupils with a good opportunity to influence what is happening in the school. Members of the council were keen to emphasise that it makes their school a better place. Importantly, they are elected democratically and take their responsibilities very seriously. Recently the pupils have had a valuable opportunity to raise funds and to decide how to spend the money, for example to buy playground equipment and to stock the school shop. Members of the council are working confidently to improve sports day. They have suitably ambitious ideas for improving the playground and school dinners.

The acting headteacher has provided the school with much-needed direction and focus. His very good understanding of the needs of the community has enabled the school to gain stability and to establish positive relationships with parents. He has systematically tackled the weaknesses which were identified in the section 10 report and has developed a series of sustainable systems and structures. His astute actions have led to a greatly improved ethos in the school. The school is very well managed: it runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Importantly, he has

agreed to continue to support the school on a part-time basis during the autumn term.

The senior leadership team has been extended. The senior staff are developing their roles appropriately and are making a positive contribution to crucial aspects of the school's work. In particular, there have been significant improvements in the generation and use of assessment data. The senior leaders have a sound understanding of the need to continue to support identified members of staff while simultaneously improving the school's curriculum so that it better meets the needs of the range of learners. However, there remains a lack of clarity about the extent to which the senior leaders are expected to be accountable for their areas of responsibility.

Overall, the acting headteacher's confident, informed and judicious leadership combined with the hard work of the staff have led the school to a point from which it is very well-placed to move forward at a good pace and in the right direction.

The chair of the governing body is dedicated to the school's improvement and has extended her knowledge of the school's strengths and needs. She has a good understanding of the need to retain the current stability within the school when the new headteacher takes up his post, while maintaining a sense of urgency and focus. The regular meetings between the chair and the headteacher are valuable. The focus and effectiveness of the governing body has continued to improve. Attendance at the meetings is good and the chair and vice-chair take an appropriately rigorous approach to promoting attendance. Suitably, eight members of the governing body took a full part in the appointment of the new headteacher: they attended training, short-listed and interviewed. Governors have taken the important step of meeting with groups of parents. Crucially, some of the governors have formed good links with leaders of curriculum areas: they have begun to visit the school during the day and to feed back their observations to the governing body.

The significant improvements in the structures and procedures in the classroom owe much to the high quality support from the consultant for the Intensifying Support Programme. He has a very good knowledge of the school and understands the next steps required to secure an improved focus on the pupils' learning. The LEA has rightly identified the need for an increased level of support for the school to help them to develop and manage the provision for particular groups of pupils.

Action taken to address the areas for improvement

1: ensure that the school fully understands the issues causing continuing complaints from some parents. Complaints should be dealt with in an agreed and consistent way to maintain the confidence of all involved

The school has continued to take effective action to address this issue. There have been no formal complaints from parents since the previous monitoring inspection. Parents have been offered a wide range of opportunities to attend meetings and workshops which have been designed to help them to support their children and to increase their contact with the school. Importantly, all of the parents have been invited to a workshop which is specific to their child's class. The workshop which was observed was well attended by parents of pupils in the reception class and made a positive contribution to creating good home-school links. Crucially, the administrative staff welcome parents into the school. Moreover, their good knowledge of the pupils allows them to have helpful and informed conversations with the parents.

The school's application for determination in order to alter collective worship in the school has been successful. The Key Stage 2 assembly on the second day of the monitoring inspection was the school's first Islamic worship. The assembly fully met the school's aspiration to interact more meaningfully with the local community, and to celebrate the pupils' cultures. Importantly, two pupils helped the headteacher to lead the worship; the other pupils responded very well. Appropriately, a Christian assembly was also provided for a small number of the pupils. The school's assemblies are regularly attended by a significant number of parents.

The acting headteacher has led this area for improvement well and has provided a good role model for the staff.

Progress is good.

2: ensure governors fully understand their roles and responsibilities

The governors' focus and effectiveness are greatly improved. They are becoming increasingly aware of ways in which they can provide appropriate support and challenge to the school.

Progress is good.

3: raise standards throughout the school for all pupils, especially boys, higher attainers, and pupils with English as an additional language, pupils who have special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils

The school has appointed a leader for inclusion, who has responsibility for special educational needs provision, English as an additional language and gifted and

talented pupils. A successful pilot project has taken place with a small group of higher attaining Year 4 pupils. This work provided good opportunities to enable the pupils to develop independent learning skills. The school has evaluated the impact of the project and taken an appropriate decision to extend the scheme to a proportion of the pupils within each year group.

The school has an appropriate range of intervention strategies to support the pupils who have special educational needs. Tracking mechanisms are in place to monitor their progress and external specialist agencies are involved where necessary. The school has rightly identified the need to improve further its provision for these pupils. Although the staff work hard to meet the pupils' needs, further training is required to ensure that pupils can participate fully in all lessons and that there is effective team work between teachers and assistants.

Provision for the pupils whose first language is not English is at an early stage of development. The school has appointed three Somali heritage teaching assistants as part of its strategy to improve communication with the pupils and their families. This is a positive and well thought out action given the increasing number of Somali heritage pupils who are joining the school. Although these staff are inexperienced, the school has made sound arrangements to provide them with training. The school has taken a sensible decision to extend the assessment of pupils at the early stages of learning English and to provide extra support outside lessons. However, the teachers have not received sufficient specific training to help them to meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language in the classroom.

The school has successfully launched a range of popular extracurricular activities, including educational visits. These provide a valuable opportunity for the pupils to extend their learning outside the formal lesson structure.

Progress is reasonable.

4: make sure teachers are clear about what pupils know and can understand and use this knowledge consistently to plan and manage lessons at the right level for learning

The procedures for assessing the pupils' progress have improved significantly. This provides the senior leadership team with a wide range of data that is being used well to monitor the pupils' progress and to provide appropriate intervention. There has been a thorough analysis of all the current data which has enabled the senior staff to begin to ask appropriate questions about the impact of management decisions. The school's marking policy is being very well used by some of the teachers and this has resulted in the pupils having a clearer understanding of how well they have achieved and what they need to do to make further improvements. This aspect of the school's work is exceptionally well led.

The teachers have developed a more secure understanding of the levels of attainment achieved by the pupils through regular testing and through moderation

of work. Good quality staff training has increased the confidence with which they assess the pupils' work, and a more consistent application of the marking policy is improving the quality of the feedback to the pupils. However, as indicated above, further work is required to ensure that the use of the available information is maximised to plan effectively for specific groups of pupils.

Progress is good.

5: improve pupils' attendance

Systems for monitoring absences and punctuality are thorough. Parents are contacted immediately in the case of any unauthorised absence. The home school link staff are working effectively with the education welfare officer to target individual cases of poor attendance and to agree improvement targets with families. The school has become increasingly sophisticated in its analysis of attendance data which has enabled important questions about attendance patterns to be raised. The school has identified that attendance in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is lower than in Key Stage 2 and suitable work has begun with selected families to address this. The number of parents requesting extended leave for their children has fallen significantly.

Progress is good.

6: ensure the school puts fully into place effective approaches that meet all relevant health and safety legislation, child protection procedures, requirements for collective worship, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

The acting headteacher has employed a consultant to carry out an accessibility survey of the school. Her report is informative and the school has drawn up an appropriate action plan in response. Some of the necessary actions have already been taken.

Progress is good. The school had addressed the other aspects of this key area for improvement by the time of the previous monitoring inspection. This area has been fully addressed and will no longer be inspected.