



24 May 2005

Mrs J Cooper  
Headteacher  
East Crompton St George's CE Primary School  
George Street  
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Oldham  
Lancs  
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Dear Mrs Cooper

**Implementation of East Crompton St George's CE Primary School's Action Plan**

Following the visit of Mrs J Austin HMI to your school on 18 and 19 May 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 third 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 reasonable progress since the last monitoring inspection and reasonable 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, the Diocese of Manchester and the Director of Education and Cultural Services for Oldham. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Reid  
Head of Institutional Inspections and Frameworks Division

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF EAST CROMPTON ST GEORGE'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL'S ACTION PLAN**

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

The headteacher is not in school this term due to ill health. A consultant headteacher, Mr Stephen Rigby, is leading the school in her absence. During the visit 11 lessons or parts of lessons, one registration session and two assemblies were inspected. Meetings were held with the consultant headteacher, the chair of governors and a representative of the LEA. 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 consultant headteacher, the chair of the governing body and a representative from the LEA.

The quality of teaching and learning has improved. All the lessons observed were at least satisfactory; four were good and two were very good. In the best lessons, the pupils were challenged to use their prior learning to solve problems and work out responses. Interesting activities, good quality resources including interactive whiteboards, connected tasks that developed a rounded picture of the topic, and the teachers' enthusiasm all motivated the pupils effectively. Well-designed story plans and writing frames enabled the pupils to develop their skills incrementally in manageable chunks. In a Year 3 and 4 English lesson, clear displays provided the guidance needed for the pupils to check their own punctuation and vocabulary. Establishing the rules from practical examples helped the pupils to make good progress, for example in a Year 4 and 5 mathematics lesson on symmetry and reflections. Careful questioning promoted the pupils' understanding of the tasks well. The good relationships, notable in lessons in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2, contributed significantly to a positive climate for learning; the pupils felt confident to share their ideas, seek help, and learn from their mistakes. Teaching assistants made a good contribution to the pupils' learning. In several otherwise satisfactory lessons, good work habits were not well established, and this, combined with the pupils' short concentration spans, reduced the pace of learning.

Curriculum planning for Key Stage 1 in the next academic year is under review. Helpfully, this will take account of the changes to the make up of mixed age classes. The curriculum is being enriched by a suitable range of activities including choral speaking, a poetry competition and a mock election. Year 6 pupils have been directly involved in planning their own learning; they have devised their own topic web for the next half term, encompassing all areas of the curriculum. Work has begun on developing St George's as an 'eco' school. A steering group comprising pupils, governors, the school's cook and premises manager, and a number of non-teaching staff has been established.

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons were at least satisfactory. They were good or better in six lessons, where the teaching was at least good. The pupils worked well in pairs; for instance, in a Year 2 personal and social education lesson, they discussed sensibly the affect of various types of behaviour on people's feelings. In reception the pupils behaved maturely; they changed activity independently, worked with persistence, and listened well to the adults who were supporting their learning. Behaviour at play and lunchtimes was generally good. A number of the pupils enjoyed playing chess during these breaks, a game recently introduced to them by the consultant headteacher. Year 6 are tending their garden with renewed enthusiasm now that the weather has improved.

The consultant headteacher is providing effective leadership to the school. He has identified appropriate priorities to address this term and worked closely with the governing body to set a balanced budget, and in considering the longer-term strategic implications of a falling roll. In addition, sensible preparations are under way to provide the required non-contact time for teaching staff from September. The full involvement of the senior management team in the decision-making processes is providing them with good professional development and assuring continuity for the coming term. Subject co-ordinators understand the school's priorities and are confident in their roles. Staff morale has improved; there is an increased sense of corporate responsibility for the school's progress.

The governing body is playing an appropriate role in setting the direction of the school. Due consideration is being given to how best it might meet its responsibilities with regard to the school's capital developments. The review of the school's policies is underway with a suitable timescale for completion.

The LEA has supported the school well in securing and financing the appointment of a consultant headteacher for this term. The link adviser knows the school well; she continues to monitor the quality of provision regularly and provide clear feedback on areas for development. The work of the intensive support programme consultant is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The programme is providing the staff with substantial, sustained professional development and good support in embedding improved practice.

## **Action taken to address the areas for improvement**

### **1: improving the leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff**

This has been commented on above.

Progress on this area for improvement is reasonable.

## **2: raising the quality of teaching to good overall**

The quality of teaching and learning has improved and is now good in both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Both the senior management team and the LEA have continued to monitor planning and classroom practice and provide guidance across the school. A more focused approach to providing support in the areas most in need of development is required.

Progress on this area for improvement is reasonable.

## **3: improving the standards in English and mathematics**

The work of the intensive support programme noted in the previous monitoring letter is continuing. Progress towards the curriculum targets for last term has been evaluated and appropriate new layered targets set for this term. This is providing good professional development for staff, enabling them to identify more accurately the small steps in learning required for the pupils to make progress. In lessons, it is improving the match of work to the pupils' learning needs. The creation of a levelled portfolio of pupils' writing is furthering the teachers' understanding of the National Curriculum sub levels and improving the accuracy of their assessments.

Several shorter-term measures to raise standards have been implemented. Higher-attaining pupils in Years 2 and 6, and a lower-attaining group in Year 6 have received regular support from LEA consultants to improve their standards in English.

Progress with measures likely to raise standards is reasonable.

## **4: strengthening teachers' behaviour management skills**

The whole school approach to managing the pupils' behaviour is well established. The pupils' are responding positively to the consistent implementation of procedures which focus, wherever possible, on recognising good behaviour. As a consequence, the use of the on-call system has decreased markedly. The introduction of the ladder, which rewards classes for good conduct in assembly, is proving effective because the prize is a popular additional five minutes playtime. Lunchtime arrangements and the deployment of midday supervisors are being kept under review to ensure that the improvements noted at the time of the last inspection are sustained.

The high number of days lost to fixed-term exclusions last term involved one pupil. Effective liaison with the LEA's referral unit has resulted in improved provision for this pupil. There have been no exclusions to date this term.

Progress on this area for improvement is reasonable.

### **5: bringing rigour to the role of the governing body**

As noted in the last monitoring letter, this issue has been dealt with fully.

### **6: teach the full programmes of study in information and communication technology (ICT) across the school**

The co-ordinator is continuing to review the implementation of the scheme of work at regular intervals to ensure that the developments noted previously are being sustained. Following an increase in the number of computers in the school, the development of a small ICT suite for group work is under way. Helpfully, this will increase both the range and capacity of the school's provision.

Progress on this area for improvement is reasonable.