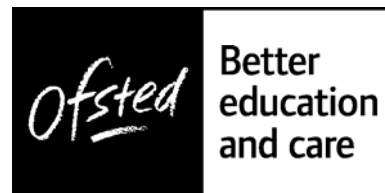


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Mr P Walker
The Headteacher
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21 June 2006

Dear Mr Walker

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF SAMPFORD PEVERELL CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Introduction

Following my visit to your school on 12 and 14 June 2006, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in October 2005.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

Evidence

I observed aspects of the school's work including several lessons in all classes. Informal chats and a more formal discussion were held with pupils. School documentation was scrutinised and recent reports and notes of visits from the local authority (LA) were read. Meetings were held with senior staff including the headteacher and with representatives of the governing body.

Context

Since my previous visit there has been a change to the staffing with the return of a teacher who has been on long term absence. Another member of staff has been promoted to a senior position as school improvement leader. Building work on accommodation and site security has progressed. The two Key Stage 2 classes share a new temporary building and the mixed Years 1

and 2 class has moved and now has better access to an outdoor area. New fencing has been erected to improve site safety. Internal building work to provide new office accommodation is continuing.

Achievement and standards

Standards are borderline in the Foundation Stage, improving in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The decline in standards in Key Stage 1 appears to have been reversed. Pupils' overall attainment in the 2005 tests was in line with the national average. There was a significant improvement in writing especially, but attainment at the higher Level 3 in all areas was too low. In Key Stage 2, the standards reached in the 2005 tests were very slightly above the national average with the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 similar to the national picture.

Work seen in lessons, in books, and on display in classrooms during this inspection indicates that the good rate of pupils' progress is being maintained in Key Stage 2, is improving in Key Stage 1, but is in need of improvement in the Foundation Stage.

Personal development and well-being

It was noted in the last monitoring inspection letter that pupils' personal development was a relative strength of the school at the time of the October inspection. This was also the case in March and remains so now. Pupils are much more enthusiastic about their lessons and the better range of activities. The strengths in pupils' personal development that were noted in the last letter are still very much in evidence. The revisions to the curriculum to ensure that pupils receive adequate opportunities for learning about multicultural issues are now embedded into planning and this key issue will no longer be reported upon.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in October 2005:

- help to prepare the pupils to live and work in a multicultural society – completed.

Quality of provision

There have been further improvements to the liaison between teachers who job share, making their joint planning more effective. Further improvements to planning have been seen with regard to a better range of activities and tasks being planned for pupils of differing abilities. The staff have engaged in many discussions to improve this aspect of preparatory work and the good outcome is indicative of their capacity to continue improving. The teaching assistants provide effective support to individuals and groups of pupils throughout all four classes. The planned work for children in the Foundation Stage does not yet display the same attention to ensuring that activities are well matched to the learning needs of the children.

There has been observable improvement in the quality of teaching and learning for pupils in Classes 2 and 3. The standard of teaching in Class 4, where an outstanding lesson was observed, is consistently high. These improvements are especially in evidence in the quality of feedback which is given to pupils so that they know how to improve their work. The staff have been working on assessment techniques and these have been particularly effective in involving pupils in understanding how to make progress. For example, the comments written in pupils' books are more engaging, less general and much easier for pupils to understand and act upon. Further improvements since the last monitoring inspection have been noted in the range of first hand experiences for pupils in Class 2 which includes the establishment of a role play area in their classroom. In Class 1, the balance between teacher-structured and child-led activities for Foundation Stage children is not favourable for securing adequate progress.

Good progress continues with the assessment of pupils' performance and with teachers raising their expectations of what can be achieved, especially in Key Stage 2. Although evident at the time of the last monitoring inspection, the necessary link between planned activities, short-term learning objectives and planned assessment opportunities is no longer clearly enough defined for children in the Foundation Stage. Consequently, there is insufficient systematic recording of their achievements for the teacher to make judgements about progress and on which to plan further work.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in October 2005:

- raise teachers' expectations and ensure that suitable challenge is provided in lessons – satisfactory
- ensure that pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work – satisfactory
- reorganise the curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of all its pupils – satisfactory
- review accessibility to the site – good.

Leadership and management

The headteacher continues to provide very strong and effective leadership. The senior management of the school has been strengthened by the internal appointment of a school improvement leader who has already begun work on monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and is providing good support to staff. The monitoring of teaching and learning is now well established. The governing body is very supportive and well informed about the progress which the school is making. Governors participate fully and actively in decision making and the future direction of the school.

Staff training and development activities undertaken since the last monitoring inspection have been well received and effective in improving assessment techniques, the involvement of pupils in first hand experiences and in cross-curricular linking. The upheaval of moves in accommodation for three of the

four classes has been well managed and staff have worked hard to make the transition as smooth as possible and quickly to establish bright new classrooms. The teachers are committed to improvement and morale is good.

Sensibly, since the last monitoring inspection, the school has reduced the number of priorities and focused on those which were recommended. Progress on these two identified issues has been good.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in October 2005:

- improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels – good
- introduce robust procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and learning – good.

External support

Since the last monitoring inspection the LA has rectified the lack of literacy support and also carried out an evaluation of the school's progress. The primary adviser continues to provide good support and very helpful reports for the school. There has also been LA support for the provision for pupils with learning needs or disabilities, for governor training, and for the Foundation Stage, all of which has been very helpful.

Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers (NQT), with full access to the LA NQT induction programme, may be appointed to the school because of the good support which would be available within the school.

Priorities for further improvement

- Consolidate the good progress on improvements to the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school and make the necessary improvements in the Foundation Stage.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Director of Education for Devon and the Diocesan Director of Education.

Yours sincerely

Peter Way
H M Inspector