



04 January 2007

Ms Rebecca Thomas
The Headteacher
Brook Community Primary School
Sigdon Road
Hackney
London
E8 1AS

Dear Ms Thomas

FRESH START: MONITORING INSPECTION OF BROOK COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Introduction

Following my visit to your school on 5 December 2006, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the fourth monitoring inspection since the school opened in April 2005.

This letter will be published 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 the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher and senior leaders, and held informal discussions with staff and pupils.

Context

The school has become more popular and is almost full with waiting lists in some years. Four new teachers have joined the school since the last visit and the school is now fully staffed. The senior leadership team has been restructured to include a strategic leader for language and literacy. There have been delays to the window replacement project but other building work and refurbishment has been completed. The school has taken over management of the breakfast club and after school provision.

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory progress has been maintained. Although standards remain below national averages the gap is closing and most pupils make satisfactory or better progress and an increasing proportion are achieving challenging targets. At Key Stage 2 the legacy of poor teaching prior to the school's fresh start continues to impact on standards because of gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Analysis of data has identified groups that are underachieving and effective strategies are employed to remedy their underperformance.

Personal development and well-being

The number of exclusions continues to decline and attendance is good. Most pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. Movement around the school is orderly and Key Stage 2 pupils listened well and participated enthusiastically in an assembly which explored the theme of "teamwork". The school has good procedures for supporting and managing the small number of pupils who have challenging behaviour. Pupils are encouraged and given opportunities to develop healthy lifestyles and become independent. They are increasingly involved in evaluating their own progress towards challenging targets.

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

- Involve pupils more actively in assessing their own learning – good progress

Quality of provision

Teaching is satisfactory with many good features. Lessons are well planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Teachers share the learning objectives well and often make frequent reference to them during the lesson. In some lessons pupils are given useful success criteria so that they are able to judge the progress that they are making toward their targets. Good use is made of a range of assessment data to track progress and to identify and challenge underperformance.

Most pupils have challenging targets and know what they have to do to achieve them. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported in lessons because teaching assistants work closely with class teachers to ensure that all learners receive the support that they need.

The school has become an attractive learning environment which pupils value and respect. Pupils' work is displayed in classrooms and in public areas to celebrate their achievements.

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

- Develop the use of assessment information to provide a better match of tasks to the pupils' needs and prior attainment – good progress
- Raise expectations and increase the level of challenge, particularly for the most able – satisfactory progress

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. Senior leaders analyse information well and have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. As a result of effective self-evaluation the senior leadership recognised that there needed to be a re-alignment of leadership responsibilities. To achieve this, a senior post with responsibility for language and literacy was created. The strategic leader for language and literacy has made a positive impact since her appointment in October and, although not complete, a number of initiatives are well advanced. The school is piloting a team based structure for management and early indications are that this has created greater capacity and accountability and has contributed to the increase in the pace of improvement. The school consults widely with stakeholders and takes their views into account when planning actions and evaluating their impact. Good partnerships have been developed with parents and with the local community. The progress made in implementing actions for improvement and evaluating their impact demonstrates a clear capacity for further improvement.

External support

The school is becoming less reliant on outside assistance. Advisors and consultants from the Hackney Learning Trust have continued to support the senior leadership team, particularly in respect to target setting and the raising achievement consultant has worked widely with Years 5 and 6.

Main Judgements

The school's overall progress is good.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Chief Education Officer for Hackney and the Hackney Learning Trust.

Yours sincerely

Robert Ellis
H M Inspector