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5 July 2007

Mrs D Adam
Headteacher
Peel Park Primary School
Peel Park Road
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD2 4PR

Dear Mrs Adam

Collaborative Fresh Start: Monitoring Inspection of Peel Park Primary School

Introduction

Following my visit with Angela Headon HMI to your school on 4 July 2007, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the third monitoring inspection since the school opened in September 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

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and subject coordinators. They also met with a group of pupils, the chair of governors and a representative from Education Bradford.

Context

Staffing has remained stable since the last monitoring visit in March 2007 and the number of pupils on roll, 407, remains the same. Two interviews have been held: these are for a performing arts coordinator and an assistant headteacher. The assistant headteacher has been appointed from within school. Both appointments are to take effect from 1 September 2007 and the teacher new to school will take a newly formed Year 5 class as pupil numbers are set to increase again. Since the last monitoring visit, the school has achieved its Healthy School's award.

Achievement and standards

Children commence school with skills that are well below what might be expected for their age. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage and this is continued effectively in Years 1 and 2. The results of the 2007 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments, in reading, writing and mathematics, show that many pupils reached or exceeded the expected standards for their age. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to achieve well. In the 2007 national tests for Year 6 pupils, standards attained were broadly average in both English and science and many pupils attained the higher levels in English. These results represent good achievement given the pupils' starting points and that a significant proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Throughout school pupils achieve particularly well in literacy and staff are now rightly focussing on improving further pupils' achievement in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported effectively from an early age and achieve as well as their peers. The school continues to set challenging targets and to develop strategies to support pupils with a clear focus on targeted intervention and marking.

Personal development and well-being

Pupils are proud of their school and they enjoy being a member of the Peel Park School community. This is evident in their positive attitudes, courtesy and good behaviour. Pupils are pleased to talk about school life and what they enjoy about it. Members of the school council talked positively about their roles and the improvement that their school has made in recent times. One such example is in the marking of their work which pupils note has improved. They very much enjoy using their green pens to respond to teachers' comments or to make improvements to their work. Pupils are proud of their achievements in respect to keeping healthy. They also know that it is important for them to attend regularly and they value the awards given for attendance as they strive to achieve their 95% attendance target. Attendance remains a focus for the school. Rigorous procedures for its monitoring, plus active intervention and partnership working with parents, has meant that pupils' attendance has improved and it is now broadly average.

Quality of provision

Improvements in teaching and learning continue to aid pupils' good achievement and the raising of standards. Senior leaders and all staff in school have responded well to the need to improve the marking of pupils' work. A strong focus on 'Assessment for Learning' has helped the school's work in this area. The resulting improvement is evident throughout school and it is clear that pupils are more involved than they were in the marking process and are guided more effectively to improve their work. There is no complacency here, however, and further training on other aspects of 'Assessment for Learning' is planned for September 2007.

The curriculum continues to provide pupils with many rich experiences. A recent Arts week provided opportunities to work with, for example, a poet, an actor and a drummer to name but a few of the visitors to school that week. One visitor wrote to the school and said of the Year 5 and 6 pupils, how very impressed he was 'by their manners, attention span and general attitude towards education'. Other links, for example, as part of the Bradford North Partnership, have engaged pupils in sporting activities. They have successfully held 'intra sports' events where all pupils in school participated, competing against one another in year groups. A Fit Kid Day was greatly enjoyed by pupils and a skipping coach added to the quality of the provision. The school's efforts have resulted in their very recent success in receiving the Healthy Schools award.

The school's work in terms of access and inclusion has recently been acknowledged by Education Bradford and they are to receive the Helping Hands Award for 2007. Targeted support and intervention for those pupils who need additional help continues. The new special needs coordinator is more confident in her role following a thorough induction. She continues to work well with Education Bradford and has plans to review and improve further the consistency of pupils' individual education plans. In the Foundation Stage, there are to be new developments in planning for outdoor provision which will coincide with the completion of building work and the deployment of new resources.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the monitoring inspection in March 2007:

- Improve the consistency of quality marking so that it reflects assessment of pupils' learning and enables them to improve further - good progress.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, other senior staff and middle leaders, continues to demonstrate outstanding leadership. She drives the school forward, works to raise standards and has a clear and shared vision, in addition to a focused commitment to secure improved outcomes for pupils. Working collectively with senior and middle leaders, she is actively developing the broad leadership team at both a strategic and operational level. Opportunities have been taken to bring forward teachers who are now involved in leading initiatives aimed at further improving pupils' achievement. Middle leaders are improving at a good pace. Action planning is strong and all staff are involved in the process of self-evaluation. This has resulted in sustained improvements in pupils' personal development, learning and achievement. Governors are well informed. They provide an effective balance of support and challenge for the school and are active participants in the school's improvement.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the monitoring inspection in March 2007:

- Continue to develop middle leaders so that they are increasingly effective in their roles – good progress.

External support

Peel Park is designated as a 'light touch' school by Education Bradford who recognises the good progress the school has made since its Fresh Start and the outstanding quality of the headteacher who has successfully led the school's improvement. As a result, support provided by Education Bradford has been reduced. However, the school reports that they can call on their school improvement officer for assistance when required. Information provided to support the school's developments in the 'SEAL' initiative is an example of such work. Recent involvement by an officer from the local authority to discuss with governors the school's good practice to promote the health and well being of staff, has been appreciated.

Main Judgements

The school's overall progress - good.

Priorities for further improvement

- Raise standards further in mathematics.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Strategic Director – Services to Children and Young People and the Managing Director of Education Bradford.

Yours sincerely

Elisabeth Linley
H M Inspector