

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045
F 020 7421 6855
www.ofsted.gov.uk



03 May 2007

Miss L Messom
Headteacher
Haxey Church of England Primary School
The Nooking
Haxey
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN9 2JQ

Dear Miss Messom

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Evaluation of the Primary and Secondary National Strategies

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 02 May with John Rutherford HMI to look at work in the Primary National Strategy (PNS).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the PNS, the visit had a particular focus on the impact of assessment for Learning (AfL).

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions, but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of eight lessons or parts of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of the PNS was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and their personal development is good. The impact of AfL on pupils' achievement and personal development is satisfactory.

- Pupils start school with skills which are typical for their age.

- Standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are broadly in line with the national averages. There has been some improvement in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 but standards in the 2006 Key Stage 2 tests in English and mathematics were not as high as in previous years.
- Lower attaining pupils and those with a learning difficulty and/or disability (LDD) make good progress. Higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as they could because some work is not sufficiently challenging.
- The school's records show that new approaches to teaching and learning, including the use of AfL, are beginning to increase the rate of pupils' progress. This has not yet been reflected in the outcomes of national tests and tasks.
- Pupils' personal development is good. They are confident, enthusiastic learners who work well in group discussion.
- The use of AfL is enabling pupils to gain confidence and develop the skills of independent learners. Many pupils know their targets and are motivated to achieve them. They are at a very early stage in developing the skills of assessing their own and others' work.

Quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There are some good features resulting from the school's recent effective use of PNS guidance. The impact of AfL on teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- All teachers are using the AfL methods which the school has recently introduced, but with differing levels of effectiveness.
- Teachers explain the lesson target to pupils and what they need to do to achieve it. Some targets are less effective because they describe the task to be completed rather than identifying new learning.
- Teachers are increasing their understanding of the National Curriculum levels at which pupils are working. However, some are not yet using this knowledge to plan work at sufficiently challenging levels for higher attaining pupils.
- Teachers agree individual targets with pupils and effectively review their progress towards them. Agreed targets enable pupils to identify their next step in learning but they do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of the overall standard that they are aiming for.
- The marking of pupils' work varies in quality. It does not always relate to pupils' targets or provide sufficient guidance on how they can improve.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory, as is the impact of AfL on the curriculum.

- The school has made a good start in extending the range of activities to increase pupils' enthusiasm for learning. This work is strongly influenced by PNS guidance.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are increasingly developed through subjects other than English and mathematics. As the school acknowledges, planning for this is not yet systematic.
- Teachers use assessment information effectively to identify groups of pupils that need additional support and to plan work matched to their needs. This is well supported by teaching assistants.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management in English and mathematics are satisfactory. The effectiveness of the leadership and management of AfL is satisfactory, and the foundations laid provide the school with a good capacity for further improvement.

- Since her appointment in January 2006, the headteacher has provided good leadership in the implementation of the PNS, including AfL, and she has the full support of the staff. Their work is beginning to make a positive difference to teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
- The leadership role of teachers with responsibility for English and mathematics is developing well through the headteacher's coaching. This work is at an early stage; therefore, the subject leaders are just beginning to have a positive influence on the quality of teaching and assessment across the whole school.
- The systems for recording pupils' progress and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are robust, although relatively new. School leaders use information from these systems effectively to plan methods for improving pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher makes effective use of PNS guidance to evaluate the implementation of AfL. This is broadly accurate and shows that much preparatory work has been accomplished. The headteacher clearly understands that much more still needs to be done before AfL becomes an integral part of teaching and learning in all classrooms.

Assessment for learning

The impact of AfL overall is satisfactory.

- The school is at an early stage of establishing AfL as an effective strand of teaching and learning in all classes.
- The headteacher, with the increasing support of subject leaders, has laid good foundations for future development.
- All staff have started to implement the principles of AfL in their daily practice and as a result, pupils' progress and personal development is beginning to improve.

Inclusion

The impact of AfL on inclusion is satisfactory.

- Assessment information is used effectively to plan additional support for lower attaining pupils. It is not used so well for providing extra challenge for higher attaining pupils.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- raising the achievement of higher attaining pupils
- improving the guidance given to pupils in the marking of their work.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop English, mathematics and assessment for learning in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Heather Richardson
Her Majesty's Inspector