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Mr Barnett
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Barnett

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 11 January 2008 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 intervention strategies.

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 four lessons and five intervention groups.

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

Achievement and standards

Pupils' achievement is good. The impact of intervention strategies on pupils' achievement and personal development is good.

- The majority of pupils make better than expected progress in English. Standards, overall, are above average.
- Progress is good because the school uses the Primary National Strategy effectively to raise standards. The school's overall strategy includes a range of interventions for underachieving pupils in each class. These interventions are for higher attaining pupils who are

underachieving as well as those who are lower attaining. Both groups make equally good progress.

- Pupils enjoy their intervention groups and are happy to attend them outside lesson time because the work combines rigorous teaching with fun. Pupils' self-esteem is good because they are praised for their achievements.

Quality of teaching and learning in English

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The impact of intervention strategies on teaching and learning is good.

- Teaching assistants lead many of the intervention groups and they contribute effectively to pupils' progress. They know the intervention programmes well.
- Teaching assistants mostly work with one class therefore they know the individual pupils and tailor their teaching to meet the needs of each one in the group. They ensure that their pupils develop skills in independent learning.
- Class teachers and teaching assistants work in close partnership to make good links between the learning in lessons and intervention groups. This helps pupils to make good progress in their lessons and to consolidate new skills.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good. The impact of intervention strategies in the curriculum is good.

- Pupils receiving intervention experience a broad and balanced curriculum because their group work is either outside lesson time or is provided through additional support within lessons.
- Staff carefully plan their intervention programmes to ensure that they meet the needs of their pupils. This involves modifying National Strategy programmes or selecting them from elsewhere. They adapt the programmes to suit any age range where records indicate that pupils are making insufficient progress towards their targets.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management in English are good. The effectiveness of the leadership and management of intervention strategies is good.

- The leadership team provides good direction for raising standards.
- Leadership in English is good. Accurate evaluation of extensive data on pupils' progress is the basis for planning interventions. For example, the leadership team has accurately identified that standards in writing are not as good as other subjects; therefore this is a priority in the

intervention programmes. As a result, pupils' achievement in writing is beginning to improve.

- Arrangements for the training and deployment of teaching assistants, and for their involvement in decision-making, enable them to make a good contribution to the quality of interventions.
- The leadership team's overall strategy for raising standards, including a range of interventions, is effective. However, they do not have a clear plan for evaluating the success of individual intervention programmes.

Intervention strategies and inclusion

The impact of intervention strategies overall is good.

- A particular strength is the teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants in providing interventions that are well-matched to the needs of underachieving pupils at all attainment levels. No group of pupils is falling behind.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- Improving achievement and standards further by planning challenging targets for each intervention and evaluating pupils' progress towards them.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop English and intervention strategies 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

John Rutherford
Her Majesty's Inspector