

28 November 2008

Mr D Jones (Federation Headteacher) and Mrs S Henderson (Acting Headteacher)
Parkland Primary School
Old Park Road
Thorpe Edge
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD10 9BG

Dear Mr Jones and Mrs Henderson

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 27 November 2008. I appreciate the time given to our phone discussions and the information which you provided. Please also thank the pupils for sharing their views about the school.

Since the time of the last inspection the school has become federated with another nearby primary school. A federation headteacher has been appointed who has overall strategic responsibility for both schools and a new head of school for Parkland, who will take up post in January 2009, has also been appointed. Three staff left in July 2008 and these posts are currently filled on a temporary basis. The establishment of the federation has prompted significant improvement to the material condition of the classrooms and corridors. All classrooms have also had interactive whiteboards installed and the hardware and furniture in the information and communication technology (ICT) suite has been replaced. Both pupils and teachers commented on the difference that this had made to the 'feel' of the school. A welcoming nurture room has also been established to provide more effective support for the most vulnerable pupils.

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.

As a result of the inspection on 10 and 11 April 2008 the school was asked to:

- Increase pupils' achievement and raise standards, particularly in English and mathematics
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching
- Ensure that class teachers with leadership responsibilities make a full and effective contribution to school management

- Set and pursue more rigorous targets for pupils' progress.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making inadequate progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Provisional national test results for 2008 indicate that standards have declined further at both key stages. Attainment targets set by the school and those included in the local authority's statement of action have not been met. School leaders and the local authority (LA) have also raised concerns that the school's own assessment data did not present an accurate profile of pupils' current attainment and progress. A secure evaluation of current standards has only very recently been achieved and, while teachers are now clear about the expectations for pupils' progress, there was no evidence available at the time of the monitoring visit to indicate that achievement has improved. Recent actions to raise standards have included the regrouping of pupils in Years 5 and 6 into three smaller classes and the restructuring of timetables with an increased focus on the core subjects in the morning session and creative curriculum themes in the afternoon. It is too soon, however, to see the impact of these changes on outcomes for pupils.

The support from external consultants and links, as a result of the recent federation, are beginning to increase the speed with which teaching and learning is improving. Pupils commented that lessons were more fun and that behaviour was better. Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning and a range of approaches including coaching, team teaching and demonstration lessons are now being used to ensure that the rates of progress are accelerated. However, while the quality of teaching has improved in some respects, the proportion of good or better teaching is still too low to overcome pupils' past underachievement.

Those with temporary responsibility for leading core subjects are also now receiving support from the LA and staff within the federation, but the development of their skills and their contribution to leading improvement is still to be maximised.

Targets are being set at whole-school and individual pupil level with an increasing degree of challenge. Assessments are now more accurate as a result of rigorous moderation and the systems to track pupils' progress are being used to better effect. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have been raised, but the positive impact on outcomes is yet to be seen. The newly appointed headteacher is visiting weekly to work alongside the federation headteacher and the acting headteacher to ensure a smooth leadership transition in January 2009.

The LA has effectively supported the establishment of the federation and action from April to September 2008 has focused primarily on achieving this goal. The quality of support and challenge has been improved since September, with the allocation of a separate school improvement officer to complement the work of the school improvement partner, who originally undertook both roles. There has been less progress in relation to supporting other aspects of the school's improvement

although, more recently, consultant support in relation to teaching and learning has been more focused. Senior leaders and the LA recognise that the pace of improvement since the inspection has been too slow, but this is now being addressed. The LA statement of action is to be reviewed once the new headteacher is in post and a support programme designed to secure a rapid improvement in standards is to be re-launched.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

Katrina Gueli
Her Majesty's Inspector