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28 November 2008

Mrs M O'Regan
The Headteacher
St Peter's Catholic Primary School
Crescent Road
London
SE18 7BN

Dear Mrs O'Regan

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 19 November 2008, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please also thank the chair of governors, all the staff who prepared so well for the visit and the pupils who shared their thoughts maturely and with great politeness.

Since the section 5 inspection, a number of important changes have taken place. The assistant headteacher has been appointed to the permanent deputy headship of the school and is no longer a class-based teacher. A member of staff resigned in October and another is on maternity leave. All three classes involved are being taught by teachers on temporary contracts. A new School Improvement Partner began to work with the school in September.

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 26 and 27 March 2008, the school was asked to:

- improve the accuracy and use of assessment and tracking information to identify underachievement and accelerate the progress that pupils make
- ensure that teaching consistently meets the needs of all pupils so that they achieve well.

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

Under the capable guidance of the well-respected headteacher, staff and governors have addressed each area for development with a firm sense of purpose. Assessment procedures have become more robust, and training and moderation

sessions have increased the accuracy with which pupils' work is marked and levelled. An effective, highly visual tracking system is used across the school, which enables teachers, subject coordinators and governors to identify immediately any pupils who are not making sufficient progress in reading, writing or mathematics. This has enabled the school to provide timely additional support and assess its impact more immediately. Crucially, it has also enabled governors to ask pertinent questions about progress, thus discharging their responsibilities more effectively.

Standards are broadly average. However, observation of the pupils' work indicates that they are rising across the school. Detailed analysis of the unvalidated 2008 national tests shows that the upward trend, apparent in the 2007 results, has continued at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, a higher proportion than in 2007 reached the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics, although slightly fewer reached the highest levels. At Key Stage 2, more pupils achieved the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics than in 2007 and the school exceeded all targets for the higher Level 5. These improvements were achieved by carefully analysing the gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge and tailoring teaching to ensure that they were eradicated. Improving standards further in writing to ensure that more pupils reach the higher levels at both key stages, rightly, continues to be the school's priority.

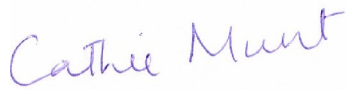
Progress in the lessons seen was good. The rate of learning is accelerating in Key Stage 1, building on the good progress previously noted in the Foundation Stage. This is due to effective teaching. Clear learning intentions and effective intervention programmes are enabling pupils of all abilities to make good progress in their learning.

The appointment of the deputy headteacher, and the funding of her current role as a non-class-based teacher, has provided the school with additional capacity to support teaching and learning. This has ensured that teachers who are new to the school quickly settle in and make a positive contribution to the pupils' progress. It has also enabled the deputy to work with groups of more able pupils to extend their learning. Ensuring that the school's policies and practices are adhered to has developed consistently improved teaching and learning. Scrutiny of literacy and mathematics books shows that pupils of all abilities have made good progress in these subjects this year. Regular monitoring, by senior and subject leaders and by local authority staff, shows that teaching is at least satisfactory in all classes and in over half it is good. Observations during this visit concur with this judgement. Good practice noted included open questioning which encouraged pupils to think for themselves, effective use of additional adults to support lower attaining groups and work set at different levels to cater for different ability groups. Excellent attention was given to developing accurate subject vocabulary, and effective marking praised pupils when they had succeeded and indicated how to improve their work when they had not. Pupils are being encouraged to respond in writing to their teachers' comments and this is having a positive impact on their involvement in their learning. All pupils spoken to knew their targets and almost all could explain clearly what they had to do to reach them.

The local authority has provided a suitable range of support and advice to the school which has included arranging links with a successful local Catholic primary school, working with staff to improve the use of assessment to match tasks and activities to match pupils' needs and interests, and providing effective training to develop the role of subject leaders. This support has had a positive impact on the school's progress. However, the evaluation group has not met in line with its published schedule and the first meeting did not take place until September. Consequently, feedback from these meetings has only recently been able to inform future development.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Cathie Munt". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Cathie Munt
H M Inspector