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Mr J Devine
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Devine

Ofsted survey inspection programme – narrowing the gap in literacy and numeracy

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 26 September 2008 to look at work in literacy and numeracy.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of literacy and numeracy, my visit had a particular focus on how effectively the school is narrowing the gap for pupils at risk of not reaching the expected level of attainment for their age. The visit also evaluated the level of expertise within the school to support pupils with learning English as an additional language.

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 three part-lessons and three intervention programmes.

The overall effectiveness of provision to narrow the gap in literacy and numeracy was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

In literacy and numeracy, standards are consistently above average and achievement is outstanding.

- Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills which are broadly typical for children of a similar age. Pupils make exceptional progress in

literacy and numeracy and reach standards that are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

- Pupils on the school's register of special needs, those from minority ethnic groups and pupils whose first language is not English attain higher than similar pupils nationally and make outstanding progress.
- Pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils behave exceptionally well, enjoy their lessons, have high self-esteem and have excellent attitudes to learning. This is a strength of the school and has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

Quality of teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy

The quality of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy is outstanding.

- Teaching is consistently strong throughout the school.
- The school has a culture of high expectation and achievement for all pupils, regardless of religion, belief or ethnicity.
- Excellent use is made of a variety of formative and summative assessments to identify pupils who are vulnerable.
- Challenging targets are integrated into lessons and help all pupils focus on their learning needs.
- Work is very well matched to pupils' levels of attainment.
- Relationships are caring and supportive and make a significant contribution to pupils' excellent personal development and outstanding academic achievement.
- Teachers take time to talk to pupils and know them very well.
- Highly skilled teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the achievement of vulnerable pupils.
- Marking is thorough and detailed and guides pupils very well to the next steps of learning.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum for literacy and numeracy is outstanding.

- The school gives high priority to pupils' social and emotional development.
- The numerous targeted intervention support strategies make a significant contribution to the high self-esteem and academic achievement of vulnerable pupils.
- Annual 'creativity' weeks are organised to allow pupils the opportunity to consolidate, practise and extend their literacy and numeracy skills in many curriculum areas. The school is rightly seeking to create even more opportunities for pupils to develop these skills across the curriculum.

Leadership and management of literacy and numeracy

The leadership and management of provision to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are outstanding.

- With the support of the deputy headteacher and all other leaders, you have successfully created a culture of high expectation and achievement for all.
- All the staff work together exceptionally well and place the personal development and well-being of all pupils at the heart of everything they do.
- The quality of teaching and learning and its impact on standards and achievement is monitored rigorously.
- Teachers feel trusted and empowered to vary their teaching style and modify the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils within their class.
- Regular and rigorous assessments enable all leaders and teachers to have a very good knowledge of the progress made by all pupils and to target support when required.
- Through regular meetings, all staff gain a thorough and detailed knowledge of progress made by all pupils, especially those most vulnerable.

English as an additional language

There are no pupils who are currently learning English as an additional language.

Inclusion

Inclusion in literacy and numeracy is outstanding.

- Excellent provision for pupils' personal and social development ensures that all pupils gain high self-esteem.
- Following detailed assessments of academic progress, targeted support in literacy and numeracy is available for the most vulnerable pupils.
- A culture of equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils is a strong feature of the school.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- extending opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop literacy and numeracy 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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers
Her Majesty's Inspector