

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



30 January 2009

Ms S Nicholson
Headteacher
Ray Lodge Primary School
Snake's Lane East
Woodford Green
1G8 7JQ

Dear Ms Nicholson

Ofsted survey programme visit - National Strategies survey 2008-09

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 09 December 2008 to look at the impact of the National Strategies on raising standards and narrowing the attainment gap.

As outlined in my initial letter, the visit focused on the work of the National Strategies in improving outcomes for children and young people. The visit focused particularly on the school's view of the impact of the National Strategies and how this is evaluated.

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 schools 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 outcomes of the visit included interviews with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, other senior staff and pupils. The inspector observed five part-lessons and scrutinised other relevant documentation.

Since your appointment as headteacher in April 2008, the school has included many of the approaches promoted by the National Strategy in its school improvement work. The senior leadership team works closely with the local authority (LA) to tailor strategy resources to meet the school's context and values the quality of the support it receives from consultants. Through regular lesson observations and evaluations of planning and work in pupils' books, senior leaders judge that the use of these resources and guidance from consultants has already been influential in improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school. However, they also acknowledge that it is too early to demonstrate impact on standards and achievement.

The school cited evidence to support their view that guidance received had improved teaching and learning. Lesson observations gave support to this

view. In three of the lessons observed during the visit, pupils were well motivated and clear about what they were learning and how to show evidence of this. Teachers and support staff worked well together and ensured all pupils participated actively in whole class activities by using mini-whiteboards or partner discussions. In a good mathematics lesson, there was a strong focus on understanding and the teacher expected pupils to explain their reasoning rather than simply give answers.

Discussions with pupils indicated that many do understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. This is an improvement on the findings of the inspection in February 2008. Senior leaders, and teachers spoken to, welcome the flexibility of the renewed literacy and numeracy frameworks but they recognise that there is a need for further professional development before they are consistently well used. For example, there is evidence that some planned units of work do not take into account assessment information and include a range of activities that do not match the needs of pupils. A further area for development observed, was weak subject knowledge. In a mathematics lesson, this slowed down learning because the ineffective exposition failed to deal with the pupils' misconceptions.

Achievement is satisfactory but the school recognises that its involvement in National Strategy programmes did not impact positively on the standards, achievement or attendance of pupils during the period 2005-2007. Standards at Key Stage 1 have fallen. In 2008 teacher assessments, they were significantly low in reading and mathematics, and exceptionally low in writing. At Key Stage 2, standards have remained below average. The 2008 results are at present unvalidated. The school does not have sufficient evidence on the use of intervention programmes, such as Springboard and Additional Literacy Support, to show if they have contributed to a narrowing of the attainment gap for some groups of pupils.

I hope you find this feedback useful.

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

Anthony O'Malley
Her Majesty's Inspector