

4 June 2009

Ms Cath Potter
Headteacher
St Augustine's C of E Primary School
St Augustine Street
Monsall
Manchester
M40 8PL

Dear Ms Potter

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 3 June 2009, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please also pass on my thanks to the chair of governors and the school effectiveness officer for visiting the school to provide me with useful information.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

As a result of the inspection on 16-17 April 2008, the school was asked to:

- improve standards, especially in English and mathematics, to ensure that pupils make even better progress
- improve the quality of teaching to make learning better and ensure that all pupils are challenged
- improve attendance, especially among hard core absentees
- develop the role of subject leaders to enable them to manage their subject areas effectively, support teachers professionally and improve the quality of provision.

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.

The results of the 2008 National Curriculum tests and assessments show that standards in English and mathematics improved considerably after the inspection and are broadly average. This represents good progress for pupils whose skills and knowledge were well below those typical for their age group when they started school. The school's own data on pupils' achievement show that the gains in 2008 have been sustained in 2009. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were exceptionally low in the 2008 National Curriculum tests and assessments, following a period of staffing turbulence. The school has responded strongly by providing



intensive support in reading, writing and mathematics to all pupils in the year group. This has enabled the majority to make very rapid progress and the school's unvalidated data for 2009 indicate a significant rise in standards. Pupils' progress is consistently good in all classes. The large proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the effective support they receive. Higher attaining pupils are making much better progress than previously because they receive more challenge in lessons.

The school's strategies to reduce absence are effective. Overall attendance is now close to the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistent absentees has significantly reduced since the inspection, although it is still above average.

Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics because the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects has improved. Teachers and teaching assistants match work to the needs of the pupils and engage them in interesting, enjoyable practical activities. They are helped in this because the school deploys its resources such that the pupils in all classes can be taught in small groups. Programmes of additional support are particularly effective in accelerating the progress of underachieving pupils. The school has very clear information about pupils' achievement and teachers use this well for setting targets and planning work. The use of assessment in lessons to help pupils improve their progress is at an early stage of development.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and the contribution of leaders at senior and middle levels is developing well. The deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher demonstrate high quality teaching. They have a good understanding of the strengths and priorities for improvement in English and mathematics across the school and are beginning to have a strong positive influence on the work of their colleagues, although this is not yet systematic. Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics have made considerable progress in developing their roles since the inspection. They have benefited from the many training opportunities provided by the school and are beginning to audit the quality of work in their subjects and to provide guidance to their colleagues. The governors provide good support based on a clear understanding of what the school needs in order to improve further. They also provide constructive challenge, particularly in respect of how the school evaluates itself.

The local authority provides effective support, which it is reducing in recognition of the school's good capacity to take the lead in improving teaching, learning and standards.

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

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford
Her Majesty's Inspector