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27 November 2009

Mrs Jane Chambers
Headteacher
Orrell Lamberhead Green Primary School
Kershaw Street
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Dear Mrs Chambers

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 26 November 2009, for the time you gave to our discussions and for the information you provided during my visit.

Since the last inspection two newly qualified teachers started at the school and one left. There has also been an increase in the number of pupils looked after by the local authority.

As a result of the inspection on 24–25 September 2009, the school was asked to do the following.

- Raise standards throughout Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is good or better throughout the school, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Ensure a consistent approach to marking and assessment, which gives pupils effective guidance on how to improve their work.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating improved capacity for sustained improvement.

The school has been successful in raising attainment. In the 2009 unvalidated national assessments Year 6 pupils attained well above the national average, particularly in mathematics. In English and mathematics almost 90% of pupils attained the expected Level 4 and over 33% attained the higher Level 5. In science almost every pupil attained Level 4. There are indications in other year groups of

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increasing attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Apart from a few variations between groups of pupils across the school, the attainment gap between the highest and lowest performing groups is closing strongly. Recently, there has been a large increase in the number of pupils looked after by the local authority. Inspection evidence suggests they are also attaining well. The school sets very ambitious targets and in most year groups pupils are close to meeting them.

The progress of pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 is also improving well. In 2009 pupils made significant progress from their starting points and from their national assessments at the end of Year 2. For example, around one third of pupils made three levels of progress from their Year 2 levels. In particular, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities made outstanding progress. The inspector visited eight lessons and pupils made good progress in half of these lessons. This was because they were fully involved and engaged throughout the lesson in purposeful tasks, activities and questions which made them think and apply their skills. Expectations of pupils' behaviour and their work were high. Pupils were well behaved, sociable, polite and respectful. This has been the result of a great deal of hard work by all staff to improve pupils' behaviour and conditions for learning. In the better lessons teachers maximised the use of time to ensure that pupils were active and little time was wasted listening too long to the teacher. In the lessons where pupils' progress was less strong time was lost organising equipment or listening to others read out their work. The school has successfully invested a great deal of time improving the quality of lessons. There is a large volume of work in pupils' books, particularly in English and mathematics, and most of it is good quality and shows that pupils are making good progress over time. In a small minority of classes there is a lack of challenge and pupils' skills are hindered by having to complete worksheets. These sometimes limit pupils' ability to apply their skills. For example, in some books pupils showed their abilities to construct paragraphs using well-formed sentences. The same pupils, in science, were constrained to write a few words completing worksheets.

There has been improvement in the quality of marking although, as yet, this has been a lower priority. In some classes, pupils are made aware of what they need to do to reach higher National Curriculum levels and are involved in marking off their progress towards meeting their targets. In some classes pupils have time to respond to teachers' comments in books and this enables them to try continually to improve their work. Teachers effectively use information from their assessment and marking to plan future lessons. This takes precedence over published or national schemes. Since the last inspection teachers are more focused on teaching lessons based on what pupils need to learn next. A strength of all the lessons observed during this visit was the quality of teachers' monitoring and assessment during the lesson. When pupils worked individually and/or in groups, all teachers assessed and gave instant feedback asking searching questions to gauge pupils' understanding and then using this to take their learning further. Assessment information is used well to identify pupils who are underachieving and to put in place carefully selected interventions to accelerate their progress. The introduction of the Assessing Pupils



Progress (APP) materials has also helped a few teachers assess pupils' work more accurately. Where these materials were trialled last year, pupils' progress was accelerated.

The school has made good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement. Members of the leadership team work closely together and have very high ambitions for pupils' attainment, the quality of teaching and for school improvement. Senior leaders are responsible and accountable for different year groups and subjects. Teachers have a good attitude towards improving their practice and they have worked hard to improve their teaching to have a more positive impact on pupils' attainment and future lives. Team leaders have increased their skill and capacity to lead, manage and support their teams. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The school's improvement plan includes the areas for development from the last inspection, clear priorities for improvement and appropriate attention on increasing the school's capacity to improve.

The local authority has provided good support to help the school focus and prioritise on the main areas which need to be improved. The current focus is on accelerating the progress of pupils who attained a Level 2c in their Year 2 national assessments so they are able to reach Level 4 by the end of Year 6. The authority has also helped with staffing issues which has enabled the headteacher to improve the quality of teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Allan Torr
Her Majesty's Inspector