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Mrs R Bailey
Headteacher
St Vigor and St John Church of England Primary School
Wells Road
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Dear Mrs Bailey

Ofsted survey inspection programme – good practice in the development of leadership skills and effectiveness

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 13 October 2009, to look at the work that you are doing to develop and sustain high quality leadership in your school and your partner school.

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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: discussions with staff, pupils, parents and a governor; scrutiny of documentation; observations of pupils in lessons; and a school council meeting. In addition, evidence was also used from discussions with teachers in your partner school.

Features of good practice observed

- The school's work to develop the skills and effectiveness of leaders at all levels, including teaching staff, pupils and parents, is outstanding.
- Inspirational leadership by you and your deputy motivates and enthuses others to do the very best that they can. You recognise and nurture potential in all members of the school community skilfully.
- Everyone signs up to a clearly articulated vision that is underpinned by shared, explicit values. A common language for learning is understood by all and used readily.

- A strong sense of identity for everyone as learners is at the hub of what drives the school. Pupils, parents and teachers are empowered to be leaders of their own learning and take their responsibility to help others to learn seriously.
- A 'can do' culture permeates the school and is underpinned by trust. Pupils, parents and staff feel valued and equal partners in the school's work.
- There is a sharp focus on developing the skills for learning through enquiry. Real-life, meaningful experiences are plentiful and enrich the curriculum for adults and pupils alike.
- You foster adventurous learning by encouraging staff and pupils to 'dare to be different'. As a result learning for both adults and pupils is exciting, fun and thought provoking.
- Expectations are high. Staff and pupils are given the freedom to innovate and take responsibility for decision making with appropriate support and guidance. They routinely use 'we' rather than 'I' when speaking because leaders ensure that everyone is part of the team.
- Clear systems and structures contribute to a calm, orderly and exciting learning environment in which all have a discernable pride.
- 'Working walls' for staff, as well as pupils, keep the central focus of leading learning in constant view and are dynamic tools for sustaining excellence.
- You and your deputy develop your own learning by working with other outstanding school leaders in different UK localities. This inspires and energises you, enabling you to be good learning role models for your own school community.
- Staff and governors of your partner school in a neighbouring local authority place high value on the partnership. They see the impact of the partnership in greater confidence about taking well-informed risks, increased creativity and rising standards.
- The leaders of your partner school recognise that they are now more proactive and strategic. Consequently, they are able to recognise potential and support and develop the leadership skills in their teaching and support staff more effectively.

Areas for development

- Evaluate the impact of partnership working on developing leadership capacity and effectiveness at all levels in your own school.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your work in this area.

As I explained previously, 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

Jackie Krafft
Her Majesty's Inspector