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21 October 2009

Mrs C Millard
Headteacher
Colmore Junior School
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Dear Mrs Millard

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 14 October 2009 to look at the work that you are doing to develop and sustain high quality leadership in your school and your partner schools.

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 and governors; scrutiny of documentation and observations of pupils in lessons. In addition, evidence was also used from discussions with teachers and senior leaders in your partner schools.

Features of good practice observed

- The school's work to develop the skills and effectiveness of leaders is outstanding. All staff, including in your partner school, speak highly of the school's collaborative and supportive leadership which engenders staff commitment and enthusiasm.
- A powerful, shared vision which is rooted in improving outcomes for pupils is evident in the school. A strategic emphasis is placed on developing leadership throughout the school. This is very evident in the strong team working characterised by highly professional dialogue about teaching and learning.
- There are many opportunities for all staff to develop their leadership skills, including by undertaking research and higher education courses. Staff speak highly of the support provided to undertake professional

development and the impact of this on their career progression as well as the quality of provision.

- Teachers in the school are very skilled in supporting others to improve their practice. They help to develop less experienced colleagues through well-structured programmes to improve teaching and learning and by providing opportunities to engage in high level professional dialogue.
- The school's work with partner schools is extremely well received. They appreciate the sensitive but uncompromising approach given to school improvement. A strong feature is how the skills of colleagues in your own school, as well as Colmore Infant School, are used to provide a comprehensive programme of support.
- Pupils benefit from the explicit focus on good leadership qualities and are given many opportunities to develop these. An excellent example was their work on researching pupils' views on their learning which informed changes to the types of homework set. These developments have been monitored by the school council.

Areas for development

- Governors in your partner school have benefited from the opportunity to observe your governors at work. However, strategies to develop this work are not as comprehensive as those in place to develop senior leaders.

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

Asyia Kazmi
Her Majesty's Inspector