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7 July 2010

Mrs Christina Oki
The Headteacher
Rhyl Primary School
Rhyl Street
London
NW5 3HB

Dear Mrs Oki

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 30 June 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. I would be grateful if you can pass on my thanks to everyone who helped me during the day, including the chair of the governing body, members of staff, pupils and your School Improvement Partner.

There have been no significant changes to the school's context since the school's last inspection.

As a result of the inspection on July 2008, the school was asked to: ensure that leaders and managers focused sharply on bringing about rapid improvements in mathematics and science; improve the use of assessment in order to plan work that challenges all pupils, especially the more able; and, improve the consistency and quality of marking so that pupils are aware of the next steps in their learning.

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 a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils' achievement is better than it was at the time of the school's last inspection. In 2009, the results of tests taken by pupils in Year 6 showed modest increases in the proportion reaching the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics and a more substantial rise in science. This year, the school is anticipating that results in



English will improve a good deal and that the previous year's rise in mathematics will be consolidated. Over the past two years the attainment gap with the national figure has narrowed considerably and the school's results are now broadly average. The targets for the proportion of pupils gaining Level 4 in both English and mathematics have been exceeded. In addition, a marked improvement has been made in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in these subjects. The school predicts that about a third of pupils will reach this level in English and mathematics, which is close to the proportion achieved nationally last year. Finally, the impact of earlier improvements in provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage is showing in higher standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1.

The attainment of pupils who are now in Year 6 was assessed at almost a year behind the national figure when they were seven years old. Assessments of their current attainment show that over the course of Key Stage 2 their progress has been good and they have made up ground; the proportion reaching or exceeding the level expected for their age is much greater than it was four years ago.

There is a strong commitment from leaders at all levels to securing improvements. A lot of work has gone in to strengthening links with parents and increasing their involvement in their child's education. Leaders also keep a close eye on pupils' progress and a range of monitoring activities helps to highlight any weaknesses in provision. Swift steps are taken if pupils are falling behind and to bring about improvements in teachers' skills where necessary. The decision to intervene where needed in all year groups and for pupils of all abilities, rather than focusing efforts on boosting the attainment mainly of lower-attaining pupils and those in Year 6, was a sensible one. It has contributed to the increase in performance at higher levels. The school's plans for improvement are detailed and wide ranging. However, there is no clear sense of priority as they are not sharply focused on the key aspects that will make the most difference, and the plans lack quantifiable criteria for judging their success.

Teachers take account of pupils' prior knowledge and their plans for lessons show that activities and tasks are adapted to meet the needs of different groups. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively. Additional tasks are planned for those who learn quickly. The particular needs of individual pupils are only occasionally reflected in lesson plans.

Most teachers mark pupils' work regularly and thoroughly in accordance with the school's policy. They maintain a good balance between praise and encouragement and pointers for improvement. Both teachers and pupils evaluate how far the learning intentions for the lesson have been met. Pupils said that they found marking helpful and they know what to do to improve. Once every term, pupils complete a piece of written work in their 'progress book'. It is carefully marked and what pupils need to do to move up to the next level is clearly stated. Marking in pupils' other books reflects the learning intention of the lesson, but does not refer to these next steps, and it is not clear how pupils know whether or not they are making

progress towards this particular target. In their marking, teachers often pose questions or direct pupils to complete pieces of work. It is not apparent that pupils have the opportunity to follow this up, however.

The school is working well with its partners including other schools and the local education authority. The good impact of this work shows in the improvements that have been made over the past two years. If the rate of improvement continues at the current pace, the school will be well placed to face its next inspection with confidence.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Linda McGill
Her Majesty's Inspector