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28 April 2010

Mrs Karon Wittmann  
Summerfield Primary School  
Intake Lane  
Leeds  
West Yorkshire  
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Dear Mrs Wittmann

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 27 April 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the Chair of Governors, School Improvement Partner, local authority adviser and staff who gave up some of their time to meet with me.

Significant and unforeseen changes to staffing during 2009–10 have affected all but two classes in the school. As a result, many pupils are currently being taught by temporary staff. The senior leadership team has a number of vacancies in key areas. The high level of turbulence in staffing, and significant issues in relation to the leadership team's capacity have had an adverse effect on the rate of progress and the capacity for sustained improvement since the previous inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 29 and 30 April 2008, the school was asked to:

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by improving the quality of teaching.
- Ensure that all teachers plan work which is closely matched to pupils' differing capabilities, particularly the more able.
- Ensure that the school's improvement planning has a sharper and more specific focus on raising standards.

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

Children's skills on entry to the school are generally below those expected for their age. Data based on school assessment show that by the time pupils enter Year 1 they have progressed well. This represents good progress. However, this rate of progress is not maintained as pupils move through the school. At the time of the previous inspection attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 was significantly below the national average in all subjects. In 2008 and 2009 attainment continued to fall. An analysis of school-held data indicates that the results of national tests in English, mathematics and science for the current Year 6 are likely to remain significantly below the national average. One of the main reasons why pupils' progress is inadequate is because the quality of teaching varies from class to class. It ranges from inadequate to good with too much that is just satisfactory. The leadership team has focused on improving the quality of teaching with specific reference to planning, the use of assessment, marking and managing behaviour. However, a high turnover of staff, including those with managerial responsibilities has meant that classroom practice has not improved significantly since the previous inspection. Recent improvements have been made to the design and in some cases the quality of lesson planning. However, planning is not always converted into practice. The use of assessment during lessons is not carried out well. Pupils experiencing difficulties and those who find tasks too easy are not identified quickly enough and their learning needs are not met. Therefore, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Other inconsistent features include the quality of marking, teachers' expectations of pupils, management of behaviour and the deployment and effectiveness of teaching assistants. Pupils display poor working habits and attitudes to learning. Standards of presentation are generally poor and pupils do not take sufficient pride in their work.

Members of the leadership team, in particular the headteacher, are acutely aware of the relative strengths and the weaknesses of the school. Apart from introducing a format for lesson planning for use across the school, a tracking system to monitor pupils' progress has also been successfully established. The school's development plan is linked to the raising attainment plan. It contains strands relating to increasing attainment and accelerating progress, improving the quality of progress and developing the school as a learning community. These elements are appropriate in relation to the needs of the school. The pace of change, though, has not been sufficient to bring about required improvements. Issues relating to adherence to school policies and the implementation of agreed classroom practice throughout the school have not been rigorously pursued. However, the unusually high level of changes to staff has created managerial difficulties for the headteacher. Incoming teachers have required induction, training and support which have taken time, often at the expense of monitoring provision. The depletion of the school leadership team has severely restricted the school's capacity to improve. Senior management responsibilities are spread too thinly and the core subjects do not currently have permanent designated leaders. The upshot is that there is no leadership from the middle, where it matters most, to improve progress and drive up attainment in English, mathematics and science.

The local authority continues to monitor the work of the school closely and is aware of its precarious position. The authority has, with the agreement of the leadership team, Chair of Governors and the School Improvement Partner, established an 'extended partnership'. This will focus on increasing the leadership team's capacity, improving the quality of teaching and learning and accelerating progress for all pupils. All of these aspects are highly appropriate and timely.

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

Christopher Keeler  
Her Majesty's Inspector