

28 January 2010

Mr M Harrington
Endsleigh Holy Child RC Primary School
Inglemire Avenue
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Dear Mr Harrington

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 27 January 2010, for the time you gave to our discussions and for the information you provided during my visit. I also welcomed the opportunity to talk with other members of staff and your School Improvement Partner and to speak informally with pupils. Please pass on my thanks to all those involved.

There have been some significant changes in staffing since the last inspection in January 2008. The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up their appointments in September 2008 and were immediately faced with staffing difficulties caused largely by long-term staff absence in Key Stage 2. The staff team is now strong and stable. The leadership team has been strengthened further by the appointment of new phase leaders in Key Stage 1 and 2 to lead learning and teaching as well as leading literacy and numeracy respectively. In addition to this, a Foundation Stage Leader has been appointed. As a consequence of these changes and the determined efforts of school leaders, the morale of staff is high and there is a palpable drive for improvement. Safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements.

As a result of the inspection in January 2008, the school was asked to:

- increase achievement in mathematics and science
- ensure that all mathematics and science lessons include enough challenge for pupils
- improve the leadership of mathematics and science.

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.



Children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. From their starting points children make at least satisfactory progress in the Nursery and Reception Year in most areas of their learning and enter Year 1 working at the expected level for their age group. In 2009 teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 show that most pupils made satisfactory progress and their attainment was broadly average. Results in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2009 show that pupils' attainment was broadly average.

Monitoring evidence shows that the quality of provision through the school is improving. Standards are rising throughout the school and the pattern of underachievement previously seen at the end of Key Stage 2 has been halted. Reliable tracking data indicates that an improving trend is discernable in pupils' achievement in mathematics and science. In lessons most pupils now make good progress in mathematics and at least satisfactory and often good progress in science. Consequently, most pupils look set to achieve the expected two levels of progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and are on track to achieve their targets in mathematics and science this year.

The leadership of mathematics and science has improved considerably since the start of the current academic year. Developments in mathematics are slightly more advanced than those in science because the leader has been in post slightly longer. Nonetheless, accurate audits of both mathematics and science and the subject leaders' lesson observations have resulted in well-focused improvement strategies which are noticeably improving outcomes for pupils. For instance, in science this term a key focus for the school is to increase the opportunities pupils have in lessons to conduct their own experiments rather than watch the teacher do them. Leaders have designated staff development time and assigned appropriate resources to facilitate this.

The quality of teaching and assessment is improving throughout the school. The proportion of lessons that are good or better in both mathematics and science is increasing and this is improving outcomes for pupils. For example, in mathematics staff's training and joint planning have resulted in a coherent strategy to improve pupils' 'mental maths'. Lessons are 'fun' according to the pupils and they are provided with 'exciting things to do'. Consequently, pupils are keen to do well and are fully engaged in activities so that learning steams ahead at a brisk pace. There are ample opportunities for pupils to work on their own and in groups. Pupils think about how they have worked out their answers and for the most part can confidently explain their method to the rest of the class. Equally, they accept that there can be different ways of arriving at the same answer and listen attentively and respectfully to their peers when they explain how they arrived at their answer.

During lessons, teachers generally build in plenty of opportunities to assess pupils' understanding and progress. This enables them to provide a range of activities so



that each pupil is working on tasks that provide the right level of challenge and stimulus for that pupil and builds solidly on the foundations of earlier learning. Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to this. They work closely in partnership with teachers to monitor and maximise each pupil's progress. This was clearly seen both in the group work going on in the mathematics lessons observed and in pupils' books. For instance, teaching assistants indicate when they have helped a pupil to achieve a task or that the pupil found the task easy. This enables the teacher to establish what level the pupil can work at independently, where more help might be needed and to plan appropriately challenging activities for the next steps in learning.

The headteacher and leadership team have gained a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school and monitor the school's actions frequently and rigorously. They have established a greater awareness among staff of the next steps required to raise standards further. The headteacher and all of the staff have pulled together and worked well as a team to overcome some significant challenges. All of the staff share a very clear vision for the school's development and improvement. Professional development activities have been targeted effectively to secure improvement. Support from the local authority and the School Improvement Partner throughout the last year has been good and has helped the school implement the actions needed to tackle the areas for improvement.

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

Wendy Ripley
Her Majesty's Inspector

