

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



12 March 2010

Ms Rizvana Darr
Addereley Primary School
Arden Road
Birmingham
B8 1DZ

Dear Ms Darr

Ofsted 2009/10 survey inspection programme: raising aspirations and achievement: the power of partnership

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 25 and 26 January 2010 to look at your partnership with Somerville Primary School during 2008 and 2009.

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 included: discussions with senior leaders, middle leaders, a group of pupils, a representative from the local authority and senior leaders from Somerville Primary School. I made brief joint visits with senior leaders to all classes at Adderley and observed a science lesson in Year 6. I also looked at key records of previous partnership work and new documentation, developed by the school since September 2009, when the collaboration came to its natural conclusion.

Discussions with you and others confirmed the collaboration between Adderley and Somerville was a short term strategy, instigated by the local authority, to provide stability to Adderley, following years of turbulence caused by many changes in leadership. I note that Ofsted placed Adderley in a category of concern twice in four years; this included a notice to improve, issued in March 2008. I also note that, following your appointment in April 2009, you worked alongside the executive headteacher for the final term of the collaboration, when the school was judged by Ofsted to be satisfactory.

Features of effective practice

- The collaboration was immediately successful. It provided swift stability for Adderley which led to renewed confidence in the school on the part of

parents and carers. Because the expertise of key senior leaders was shared across both schools, core structures were established quickly, such as systems for: monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, monitoring the pupils' progress and performance management. Senior staff at Adderley received appropriate training through opportunities to work alongside experienced colleagues. Over time, this contributed to the growing capacity within the school to continue to improve, without the intervention of the partnership.

- Records show that the quality of teaching and learning improved over the year, owing to the recruitment of a large complement of new staff and short-term secondments from Somerville and other schools. Joint staff meetings and training enabled the sharing of effective practice in curriculum planning, assessment, marking and moderating pupils' work. These were also key factors that helped to improve the school and halt the legacy of underachievement.
- The additional strategic partnership for governance, established by the collaboration, secured swift improvement in the effectiveness of the governing body. This robust support enabled governors to fulfil their statutory responsibilities and be rigorous in holding the school to account.
- Under your determined leadership and that of your new deputy headteacher, Adderley is continuing to improve. You both focus relentlessly on raising achievement. Most importantly, you are acutely aware of the scale of underachievement and low standards still existing across the school, particularly in writing. You are becoming increasingly successful in communicating your new, laudable vision to staff. Most importantly, you are ensuring they commit to moving at the fast pace required to raise standards. The senior and middle leaders I met and the chair of governors are executing their responsibilities enthusiastically and with great commitment to ensure the school continues to improve.
- Pupils are unanimous in their praise for the imaginative improvements made to the learning environment, their new school logo, the nutritious lunches and the achievement assemblies. They said: 'Attendance is improving; we are nearly reaching the school target! Learning is more fun. We have a voice. Our views are important and behaviour is so much better.'
- Classrooms are well organised although, in a few, there are insufficient displays to support the pupils' progress in literacy. You are making good improvements to the quality of both the indoor and outdoor learning environments in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The science teaching I observed was purposeful. Pupils made good progress, helped by the sensitive monitoring they received from the adults and the effective support strategies in place, such as technical prompts and 'learning walls'.
- We agreed the pace of learning needs to improve across the school to ensure pupils catch up at a rapid speed. There are insufficient demands placed upon pupils to respond to questions, to plan and to take ownership of their learning. Many show compliant attitudes and are not yet fully independent in their learning.

- Monitoring records for teaching and learning and pupils' progress are comprehensive. Your plans for the further improvement of monitoring systems are appropriate. Nevertheless, we agreed the use of data by staff requires further improvement, to ensure targets set for pupils are challenging and their progress is monitored assiduously.

Areas for development, which we discussed, include:

- increasing the pace of learning across the school to ensure all pupils make rapid progress in every class
- improving the use of data to ensure challenging targets are set for pupils and their progress is monitored rigorously.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop partnerships in support of school improvement.

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

Mary Harlow
Her Majesty's Inspector