

PROTECT-INSPECTION

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14 July 2011

Mrs R Bainbridge
Headteacher
Greenland Primary School
School Terrace
South Moor
Stanley
County Durham
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Dear Mrs Bainbridge,

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Greenland Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 13 July 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

Since previous inspection, the headteacher has retired and been replaced by the acting headteacher in a substantive post. Three newly qualified teachers and a new member of the governing body have been appointed, and three full time support staff have left and not been replaced. Work on a new school building is due to start in November 2011.

As a result of the inspection on 19 and 20 Jan 2010, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

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.

Attainment has risen since the last inspection and pupils are achieving more highly, many from significantly low starting points when they start at the school. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals continues to be exceptionally high at 46.3% compared with 18.5% nationally. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities has significantly increased and is now well above average. Pupils are making better progress because the match between their work, capabilities and starting points has improved. Work is planned more effectively to cater for the wide range of ability and needs. Results in national tests towards the end of Year 6 significantly improved in 2010. School data shows challenging targets for 2011 are being met against the background of a lower ability cohort. Attainment in mathematics is higher than English and, although the quality of writing has improved, the school knows there is more to be done.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The school is taking effective action to increase the amount of good or better teaching. Recently improved performance management systems are working well and the proportion of good teaching has increased since the last inspection, largely as a result of the appointment of new staff and the sharing of best practice. Assessment information is used more effectively when planning lessons and matching work to pupils' needs. A revised tracking system is identifying underachievement effectively and making sure pupils receive the support they need. This is a particular benefit to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who receive provision that is more appropriate to their needs and they are making better progress as a result. Pupils are clear about what it is they are expected to learn and, as a consequence, the quality and standard of pupils' writing has improved with pupils able to write using different styles and a wider range of vocabulary. For example, in a Year 6 class, pupils had to create a character in order to write a first person narrative plan of escape as part of a fantasy task. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate how well they are learning and help each other to do this well. The school's marking policy is implemented more consistently and the impact can be seen in gains in the pace of learning.

Changes to the curriculum, such as higher quality intervention to support individual learning, are providing more systematic opportunities to develop basic skills, particularly writing. Developments in building on previous learning and using skills from other areas are increasingly successful. Standards of written work are better because pupils are being provided with a more suitable curriculum which includes accurate guidance to help form letters correctly and develop fluent handwriting.

The quality of leadership and management has been strengthened and the school is demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement. The purpose of monitoring is understood more clearly by managers at all levels, resulting in a sharper focus on achievement and progress. The school has ensured the requirements of national regulations for infant class size have been met, which was a point for improvement in the last inspection. The analysis of the school's development and performance has improved and members of the governing body are more aware of strengths and areas for improvement. Outcomes of the analysis are effectively referenced to the school improvement plan and the impact of action taken is evaluated regularly. The local authority has provided effective support for school improvement which is carefully tailored to the school's needs. The School Improvement Partner has worked closely with senior leaders and provided effective challenges in order to move the school forward.

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

Yours sincerely,

Paul Hancock
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 19 and 20 Jan 2010

- In order to raise standards and ensure that all pupils make progress commensurate with their capabilities and starting points, the school needs to:
 - increase the amount of good or better teaching
 - ensure that the changes to the curriculum provide opportunities systematically to develop pupils' basic skills, particularly their writing, in all subject areas
 - make certain that all teachers use the school's assessment information effectively when planning lessons so that all tasks match the learning needs of pupils
 - ensure that the requirements of the national regulations for infant class size are met as regards the Reception class.