



30 November 2006

Mrs Stevens
Hinguar Community Primary School
Hinguar Street
Shoeburyness
Southend-on-sea
Essex
SS3 9AN

Dear Mrs Stevens

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF HINGUAR COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Introduction

Following my visit with Roderick Passant and Ian Nelson, Additional Inspectors to your school on 8 and 9 November 2006, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in December 2005.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, middle managers, the chair of governors and representatives from the local authority (LA). Informal discussions were held with other members of staff and with pupils, and samples of work were examined. A range of documents was scrutinised. Using this evidence, inspectors made the following observations to the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, chair of governors and a representative from the LA.

Context

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

Achievement and standards

Unvalidated test results for pupils in Year 6 in 2006 show that standards have improved over the previous year, particularly in mathematics and science where they were broadly average. However, disappointing results in writing meant that standards in English were below average, although slightly higher than in 2005. The assessment information collected by the school shows that most children are now making at least satisfactory progress, with a significant number making good progress. However, around a quarter of children are still not making the expected progress. The school has secure systems for analysing the assessment data. It is able to show the progress of whole cohorts, different groups of children, for example by gender, and individuals and is able to show the distinct link between poor attendance and children's underachievement.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in 2005:

- Raise standards of achievement, particularly in Key Stage 2 - satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Pupils are friendly and cheerful, and many show a lively attitude to their daily life. Through the school council pupils are keen to play an active part in helping the school to improve. One pupil summed it up, 'we are not afraid to try something new'. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good. Attendance has improved and is in line with the national average. The school's strategies, including new record-keeping procedures, and effective partnership with parents to improve punctuality have been very effective.

Quality of provision

The school has eradicated the inadequate teaching and raised the proportion that is satisfactory and good. Teachers are confident, they make the objectives for each lesson clear to pupils and set them targets to which they can aspire. They make effective use of teaching assistants to support groups of pupils who need extra help with their learning. Pupils' are grouped according to ability for some lessons and the best teaching plans work at different levels within the set. At times, however, tasks are not matched closely enough to individual pupils' learning needs and some say their work is too easy. Most lessons move at a good pace and keep pupils busy, as in a mathematics lesson where Year 3 pupils learned division by sharing objects with their group, making effective use of their times tables to help them. Occasionally the pace slackens and teachers take too long to gain children's attention when they want to address the whole class or get them to tidy away.

Teachers' marking of work has improved and now includes useful comments which tell pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to further improve their work. For example, one comment noted 'Next time describe how your character feels', and another 'Next time try to include question marks'. However, there is little evidence of how teachers know children have acted upon these suggestions in future work. Additionally, there is little evidence in pupils' books of them systematically evaluating their own work, although in lessons a simple traffic light system is often used to help the pupils review their learning. Teachers do not always challenge poor presentation of work, particularly writing.

The school now has extensive systems for checking how well children are doing in English, mathematics and science. Teachers have begun to use, and understand, the data produced as a tool for guiding learning. There are copious records showing the number of national curriculum levels and sublevels that children make each year with interim assessments showing which children are on track to reach their targets and which need extra help. Older pupils know what national curriculum level they are expected to get by the end of Year 6 and what they need to do to achieve their targets. The assessment information is used well to identify which sets to place children in for English and mathematics and which children need extra support to counter underachievement.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in December 2005:

- Improve the quality of teaching by focusing on learning outcomes particularly in mixed-age-classes – satisfactory progress.
- Improve the assessment information to help teachers plan lessons that match the pupil's learning needs by building effectively on their previous knowledge – satisfactory progress.

Leadership and management

Since the last monitoring visit the school has introduced a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating its work. The headteacher has sensibly involved the senior staff; they are now clear about their roles and responsibilities.

The headteacher has made good use of external advice to support the middle managers. For example, the LA advisor has provided professional support for the headteacher in developing the capacity of middle managers and school self evaluation. The middle managers are now working effectively with the headteacher and her deputy. They are using information collected from monitoring activities to inform improvement work. For example, pupils' completed national test papers have been analysed to highlight areas for further development.

The school has collected attainment data for all of its pupils from Reception to Year 6 and has put into place appropriate arrangements to add to this data on a termly basis.

Sensible decisions have been made to move teachers and teaching assistants to different year groups. Appropriate support has been provided for teachers who need it. Senior and middle managers are providing good professional support to the teaching staff through regular observations of teaching and learning. Feedback notes indicate that these are carried out rigorously and teachers are given clear and appropriate targets for improvement.

The governing body, though five governors short, has a good range of expertise. Governors have grown in confidence. They are provided with clear and frank information about the school by the headteacher. As a result, the governing body is now effective in supporting and holding it to account.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in December 2005:

- Improve the quality of leadership and management through the use of rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures – satisfactory progress.

External support

The LA's partnership with the school is effective, particularly in building the capacity of the leadership and middle management team. The revised LA action plan is carefully aligned to the school improvement plan which has ensured that the support provided is much more focused. This has enabled specific issues to be addressed effectively by the school whilst at the same time building their capacity to further improve.

The training and coaching received by the senior and middle management team has led to the growth in confidence and sharper focus on their roles and responsibilities. In turn, they support each other and other staff. The result is the emergence of an appropriate professional culture in the school.

Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures - satisfactory.

Progress since the previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improve the teaching of writing for all pupils.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to evaluate for themselves how well they are doing.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Children's Services of Southend-on-Sea.

Yours sincerely

Deemed signed in absence of signature

Rashida Sharif
H M Inspector