

1 April 2009

Mr Andrew Redman  
Executive Headteacher  
Christ Church CofE Primary School  
45 Commerell Street  
London  
SE10 0DZ

Dear Mr Redman

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you, the chair of governors and your staff gave me when I inspected your school on 24 March 2009, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please also pass on my thanks to the children who so enthusiastically showed me their work.

As a result of the inspection on 9 and 10 July 2008, the school was asked to:

- raise standards in English, mathematics and science across the school and make sure each pupil achieves the highest standard of which they are capable
- raise the proportion of good or better teaching by increasing the pace of teaching and the expectations of what pupils are capable of so that pupils learn at a faster rate
- make leaders and managers at all levels accountable for standards and achievement and strengthen their role in monitoring so that they can become a force for change
- improve the outdoor accommodation and the consistency of teaching and learning in the Reception class so that children achieve the standards of which they are capable.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The school has taken a range of good steps to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress. Standards in 2007 were exceptionally low in English, mathematics and science. They rose in 2008, particularly in English and mathematics, although they remain below those found in most schools. The indications are that this improvement will be maintained this year. Evidence from lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that better progress is being made on the part of



an increasing number of learners, particularly in writing and mathematics. In addition, the school's own assessment information shows that more pupils are making progress towards their targets in literacy and numeracy at the rate expected of them. This is because improvements in teaching and learning are accelerating the rate of progress in lessons. Pupils are more involved in their learning and are increasingly aware of their targets and of how their work might be improved. There are regular discussions of how well pupils are achieving. This has led to a marked improvement in identifying those pupils who need extra support and in ensuring that underachievement is eradicated. As a consequence, support and intervention are planned more appropriately, staff have a clearer focus on the needs of individual learners and are increasingly confident in judging the progress pupils are making. Standards in science, however, have not risen as much as they have in English and mathematics. This is largely because the school focused initially on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy from their very low position at the time of the last inspection. Action is now being taken to address the weaknesses in science and the new initiatives are beginning to bear fruit. Displays in science, for example, show a much greater focus on scientific investigation and independent learning.

There have been good improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection. Senior staff have an accurate understanding of the overall quality of teaching and learning, and lesson observations during this visit confirm their judgements. The better teaching has clear objectives, a lively pace, high expectations and a good range of activities to motivate pupils. Pupils behave well and show good attitudes towards their work. In one class, for example, pupils were very excited by the discussion because, as one of them said, 'We're only having ideas – nobody in the whole wide world really knows the answer!' Much more effective use is being made of teaching assistants and pupils clearly appreciate the support they provide. The classroom environment has improved, with a clear focus on helping pupils to do better work. As one member of staff commented, 'There is a meaning behind the displays now; you can see the progress children are making.' The school has rightly recognized that, where teaching is less good, activities do not always sufficiently match the range of pupils' needs and the final parts of the lessons do not enable them to develop their skills in explaining what they did well and what they need to do to improve.

The executive headteacher, supported by an enthusiastic senior team, has continued to drive improvements. There is a very positive feel to the school and a real sense of shared responsibility to drive standards up. As one member of staff commented, 'I'm now really familiar with the school development plan – to be honest, I wasn't before.' Subject leaders are now leading developments in their subjects effectively and are becoming a real force for change. Governors are gaining confidence in their role as improvement partners and have a stronger awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

The outdoor area for the Reception class has improved significantly since the last inspection and, during this visit, good outdoor learning activities were observed. The new area includes a range of very good facilities such as a large climbing area, a

quiet space and a vegetable and flower garden. Planned opportunities for children to engage in outdoor learning are clearly identified and there is now a good free flow of learning activities between the classroom and the outdoor area. The school has drawn up plans for the establishment of a covered, secure play area for the Reception class. Finance for this development is available. Teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved in terms of consistency, the expectations of what children are capable of achieving and the accurate assessment of their learning.

The local authority is providing good support. Good use is being made of expertise from the partner school and other neighbouring schools. The local authority's action plan was approved by Ofsted and needed no further amendment.

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

Lynn Bappa  
Additional Inspector