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30 September 2010

Mrs N Deane
The Headteacher
James Wolfe Primary School and Centre for the Deaf
Randall Place
Greenwich
London
SE10 9LA

Dear Mrs Deane

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of James Wolfe Primary School and Centre for the Deaf

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 23 September 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to staff, and pupils for their help. In particular, I would like to thank the chair of governors and the local authority primary adviser for coming into school to meet with me.

There have been no contextual changes to the school since the inspection took place.

As a result of the inspection on 13 and 14 May 2009, 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.

Since the inspection, a more robust approach to recording and analysing pupil attainment has been introduced through the adoption of a local authority system. This is based on regular pupil assessments and the consistent recording of results. This has enabled staff to track accurately pupils' progress. Analysis of data indicated that boys have not been achieving as well as girls. The school has swiftly taken steps to rectify this by introducing topics into the curriculum that appeal to both boys and girls. The boys report that programmes of study, such as the Second World War, captivate their interest. They are also responding well to a more practical



approach to learning, thus enabling the gender gap to narrow considerably. Greater analysis of data has also highlighted the difference between those pupils who are entitled to free school meals and those who are not. Through the provision of support programmes for specific groups of pupils, the school has made a significant inroad into rectifying this. Consequently, the results from teacher assessment tests in 2010 and pupil tracking systems show that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are now making faster progress in relation to their starting points.

The success of improvement initiatives can be attributed to the development of a greater understanding of accountability by all leaders and managers. In conjunction with subject leaders, the managers of specific age groups have successfully developed clear systems which monitor the quality of teaching and measure its impact on pupils' learning. As a result of a consistent and robust approach to lesson observations and openness in sharing the outcomes of these sessions, the quality of the teaching profile has improved. Lessons move along at a fast pace and there is a good balance between teacher and pupil input. Leaders and managers scrutinise the pupils' work books regularly and confirm that the quality of marking has vastly improved. Good quality work is acknowledged with concise explanations given to support the pupils along the next step of their learning journey. Pupils are very clear about the targets they are given for improvement and older pupils have a good understanding about the levels they are working at in relation to national norms.

The school's decline in the attainment of mathematics has also successfully been halted. This is as a result of the information gleaned from the greater consistency in lesson observations and teachers actively working alongside each other. Specialist training has improved teachers subject knowledge and confidence. The greater focus on pupil engagement is enabling the pupils to apply their skills to a range of scenarios and this is preparing them well for the future. This was clearly evident when Year 6 pupils were observed applying their understanding of the seven times table to a range of different scenarios.

The data collected from pupils' tracking information and lesson observations are effectively used, not only by senior leaders but also by governors, to analyse the strengths of the school and identify areas requiring further development. Governors have increased their visits to the school and individuals have formed close links with key members of staff. This has enabled them to gain a greater understanding of the work of the school and offer greater levels of support and challenge.

The recently introduced uniform has increased the pupils' sense of identity and pupils are incredibly proud of their school. Their high levels of confidence stem from the fact that they feel safe in school and know that if a problem arose there would always be an adult they could approach for help. Pupils feel that the use of the 'thinking chair', where they may be required to sit should a misdemeanour occur, contributes to the very good behaviour in and around school. South African



landscapes and pencil drawings which sensitively depict perspective and paintings of the local Greenwich market illustrate the high quality of reflective work achieved by the pupils. Sporting and fundraising events between the four different school teams promote its strong community and the pupils' council is appreciated as an effective way of raising any suggestions or concerns.

The school has made effective use of the good quality support from the local authority. Adopting its systems to track and assess its pupils and partaking in data training and moderation exercises have successfully transformed the way in which leaders and managers plan for future improvements. High quality local authority training has impacted well on raising the confidence of staff to teach mathematics. Effective support and challenge from the School Improvement Partner have also raised the awareness of senior leaders and governors. These have enabled them to tighten their systems for self-evaluation.

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

Lorna Brackstone
Her Majesty's Inspector



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2009.

- Raise standards for all learners through the improved use of assessment and target setting.
- Ensure that systems and processes to support high-quality teaching and learning are securely in place and monitored rigorously.
- Ensure that leaders and managers at all levels are held accountable and are involved in rigorous self-evaluation as a means to promoting achievement.