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19 July 2010

Mrs Yvonne Hunter
The Advisory Headteacher
Temple Hill Community Primary and Nursery School
St Edmund's Road
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Dear Mrs Hunter

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 8 July 2010 and for the information which you provided during my visit. Please pass on my thanks also to the local authority representatives that I met on my visit.

As at the time of the last inspection, the school is led by an advisory headteacher, who has now been appointed as the permanent headteacher from September 2010. In March, the local authority applied to the Department of Education to establish an interim executive board and is awaiting their decision. In the meantime, there is no governing body and the local authority is fulfilling the role of governance. The staff team remains the same as at the time of the last inspection with the exception of one change to the teaching team. This teacher is also a member of the senior leadership team. Four teachers will leave the school at the end of this term.

As a result of the inspection on 2 and 3 December 2009, the school was asked to:

- improve pupils' progress and attainment in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 to 6 assessment by:
 - ensuring that plans to focus upon improving writing from January 2010 are implemented
 - giving pupils more realistic and relevant problem-solving and investigative activities in their mathematical and science-based work
- improve the consistency and quality of teaching to the level of the best by:
 - ensuring that lessons really motivate pupils and engage their interest through activities being better matched to pupils' needs
 - teaching more lessons at a brisk pace so pupils cover more ground in their learning
 - ensuring that the good quality marking found in some classes is a feature found in all classes to help pupils to improve their work
 - ensuring children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have more prompts from adults when working independently to extend their learning.
- ensure the quality of the curriculum in the coming school year by:

- ensuring children in the Nursery and Reception classes have more challenging open-ended activities
- planning for greater use of key skills within other subjects to help pupils use and develop them more regularly
- extending the range of opportunities for pupils to learn about those who live much further away from the school in other countries or localities.

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 right things are in place and improvements that were beginning to show at the time of the last inspection have continued.

As the year has progressed, the school's tracking information shows that increasing proportions of pupils in Years 2 and 6 are reaching the levels of attainment expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. The information indicates that pupils are making better progress and making up for past underachievement. Particular improvements can be seen in pupils' writing skills and this matches well with changes made to the curriculum and teaching. Pupils respond well to improved opportunities to write extended pieces around themes that interest them. They like to write. They can explain how their writing has improved and know what their teacher is looking for next so that their work can be even better.

A key to improved attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy is the improvement in assessment. An assessment cycle, in its infancy at the time of the last inspection, provides teachers and senior staff with the information that they need to track and evaluate the achievement of individual pupils more thoroughly. This is helping teachers to be more aware of, and more accountable for, the rates of progress made by individual pupils from one term to the next. It is also helping to focus additional support for those pupils in each class who need extra help to reach age-appropriate levels of attainment. This now needs to be further refined to target additional support based on rates of pupils' progress as well as their levels of attainment. Less information is available for achievement in science, although the new coordinator already has plans to bring this up to speed. The senior leadership team has not yet combined all of the information available to have an overview of how much progress pupils across the school have made in each subject.

The quality of teaching is now routinely satisfactory and increasingly good or better. Teachers are conscientious in their approach to improving their practice and have benefited from good quality leadership of teaching by senior staff. This includes well timed professional development, backed up by regular monitoring of lessons and pupils' work, so that teachers know what is expected of them. As a result, there is greater consistency in teachers' plans and teachers' marking of pupils' work has clearly improved. This provides pupils with more of the necessary tools to be active in their own learning and to be clear about what they are learning and why. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are provided with more opportunities to extend their learning when staff follow up their choices and contributions. The recent focus across the school on planning different activities for pupils of different abilities is starting to pay off in class. There is still some over emphasis on adult

support and volume of work produced, rather than activities tailored for different groups to help all pupils to reach the learning objectives more independently.

Changes to the curriculum already underway at the time of the last inspection have had a good impact on motivating pupils through activities that are of interest and provide a purpose that is well understood by them. The staff have also taken the opportunity to include within this more learning activities that support an understanding of different cultures, beliefs and languages. Further revision of the curriculum is in place for September and is securely based on the development of pupils' skills, mapped against the National Curriculum for appropriate coverage and attainment levels. This framework has proved to be effective over the past year, providing teachers with flexibility to match learning activities to pupils' needs and interests. One way that they do this is by giving pupils a say in what they want to learn at the beginning of each theme, as well as checking out what they already know and understand about the topic. The school's plans to develop the curriculum tend to focus on actions rather than clear criteria to measure success towards the planned improvements. Mathematics is to be a key focus for whole school curriculum development for the next academic year and will look at providing more problem solving and investigative work as identified in the last inspection report.

The majority of support from the local authority has been through the appointment of an advisory headteacher. The advisory headteacher has provided continuity of leadership with a clear focus on what needs to be done. The local authority has provided good support for the business of school governance in the absence of a governing body. The delay in ratifying the arrangements for an interim executive board has complicated matters in relation to the formal and active involvement of members. Nevertheless, suitably experienced members are already available for appointment and they are kept well informed through a series of regular meetings with local authority officers. The school has made good use of support from local authority advisers, particularly for moderating its own judgements about pupils' attainments and ensuring that any underperformance by staff is addressed sensitively and swiftly.

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

Heather Yaxley
Her Majesty's Inspector