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23 May 2008

Mrs H Dacey
The Headteacher
St Peter's Church of England Primary School
Liverpool Grove
Walworth
London
SE17 2HH

Dear Mrs Dacey

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF ST PETER'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Following my visit to your school on 20 May 2008, 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 July 2007. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Diocese of Southwark and the Director of Children's Services for Southwark.

Yours sincerely

Robin Hammerton
HM Inspector

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF ST PETER'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the second monitoring inspection: 20 May 2008

Evidence

HMI observed the school's work, including lessons, playtimes and an assembly, as well as scrutinising documents and pupils' work. Meetings were held with the headteacher, pupils and a representative of the local authority (LA). HMI spoke to the chair of governors by telephone.

Context

The school roll and staffing have again remained stable since the previous monitoring inspection.

Achievement and standards

Lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's further improved data all indicate that pupils continue to make at least steady progress in English and mathematics in all year groups, although this is slower in Years 3 and 4. Recent internal test results in Year 5 in reading and writing indicate good achievement by most pupils over the last year. Across the school, reading standards continue to be higher than those in writing. The school has begun to analyse which aspects of writing most need further improvement (for example, structuring sentences and imaginary stories), although this has not yet appeared specifically in the school development plan.

Scrutiny of work indicates some variation in standards between foundation subjects. For example, standards seen in history are in line with national expectations and higher than those in geography because the range and depth of work in history is better than that in geography.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in July 2007:

- Raise standards in mathematics across the school and in English in Years 3 to 6 – satisfactory overall, but good in some aspects.

Personal development and well-being

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour continue to be a huge strength of the school. When leading the assembly observed, a group of pupils showed great confidence, sensitivity and empathy when talking about road safety and then the recent disasters in Myanmar and China. The other pupils were very attentive and appreciative, showing clearly the very strong and supportive family atmosphere which pervades the school. The choir sang delightfully and, by the end, there was a prayerful atmosphere, showing that pupils' spiritual development remains at a high level and important to them. Pupils play together in an exemplary way, caring for each other

and really enjoying their shared games and activities. They collaborate well in lessons and love being in school.

Quality of provision

The lessons briefly observed by HMI throughout the school were all at least satisfactory and there was good practice in many. In each class, pupils were enjoying working together on tasks which were appropriately challenging for most. Behaviour and relationships were consistently very good. Teaching assistants contributed constructively and actively. These observations, and the scrutiny of pupils' work, support the school's view that teaching and learning continue to advance and indicate the success of the support and coaching provided to staff, where needed.

The school has improved its system for tracking pupils' progress significantly. Assessments made of each child are reliable and made available for all staff to use to help plan their teaching. This is an excellent development which highlights several aspects of teaching which are better than before but need further improvement or refinement. For example, in some lessons, although work is generally more demanding, it is still not well enough matched to the assessed needs of all pupils, which means sometimes work is too difficult for some and too easy for others. Too often, the intended learning outcomes of any different work provided for particular individuals or groups are insufficiently precise. However, there have been some further worthwhile improvements in specialised provision for higher attaining pupils, which the school views as a high priority. Pupils know their personal targets well, which raise their expectations of themselves, but some of the targets are not specific or well focused. The quality of marking remains erratic. Some is good but too much work is unmarked or given cursory comments which are not sufficiently related to the intended learning. However, pupils consistently say that staff are provide good help in overcoming any problems they encounter in their learning.

The curriculum continues to be well supported by visits out. There is a wide range of very popular and interesting activities outside the school day, with the school ensuring successfully that all pupils join in. For example, many pupils really enjoy a lunchtime gardening club.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in July 2007:

- Enable teachers to make better use of assessment and marking in tracking all pupils' progress and in setting them work at the appropriate level of challenge, especially for higher ability pupils – satisfactory

Leadership and management

The school's self evaluation and improvement planning are much improved and better linked together. Activities which have always been done by senior staff, such as lesson observation and work scrutiny, are now more closely co-ordinated. Partly as a result, the school's self-evaluation is more thorough and tightly focused. It provides a much clearer basis for consistent improvement, though some statements within it are insufficiently linked to evidence. In March, staff, governors and the LA were productively involved in a day spent reflecting on the past and planning for the

future. This has led to a new sense of shared purpose across the school and the better school development plan. The plan is clear about what the school intends to achieve and is sufficiently ambitious without being unrealistic. It contains appropriate objectives and actions, though in some aspects could be more detailed and precise. Overall, the school now shows a stronger capacity to improve.

The governing body, working productively with the headteacher, has contributed to these improvements well. It is led by a well-informed and committed chair and is clear about what it needs to do. Its school improvement committee continues to meet weekly and is becoming a model of good practice in the school's current circumstances. The committee's meetings focus directly on important issues about pupils' progress and experiences in the school. Its discussions are rigorous, holding the school to account in a robust but supportive style.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in July 2007:

- Senior leaders and governors must make more effective use of self-evaluation in analysing areas of weakness, planning to improve them and monitoring the progress towards agreed measures of success – good

External support

The most recent report by the school improvement partner is more useful than those seen at the last monitoring inspection. It is a helpful summary of evidence available about the effectiveness of different aspects of the school's work, with some appropriate pointers for the future. However, the key support role for the school is taken by an experienced LA adviser. She provides good, highly regarded practical support and has encouraged and guided the ongoing improvements, and sharpening of practice, well. LA consultants have continued to work effectively to improve aspects of teaching.

Priorities for further improvement

- Continue to use the school's assessment data in planning and lessons to match work more closely to pupils' needs and improve still further their progress.
- Analyse in more detail the weaker aspects of pupils' writing and work to improve these through the school development planning process.