

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



7 October 2010

Mrs Nicola Shipman
Executive Headteacher
Monteney Primary School
Monteney Crescent
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S5 9DN

Dear Mrs Shipman

Ofsted survey inspection programme: leadership of more than one school

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 5 and 6 October 2010 to look at the leadership of the federation.

As outlined in my initial letter, the visit had a particular focus on the effectiveness of leadership to sustain improvement in all schools in the federation.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to a national report. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributors or contributing institutions but individuals and institutions will not be identified in the main text without your agreement.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included interviews with senior leaders, middle leaders, governors, staff, parents, local authority representatives, learners and the scrutiny of relevant documentation.

The effectiveness of the federation leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement is good.

Context

The federation consists of Monteney Primary School and Fox Hill School and was established in September 2009. Prior to federation the schools collaborated in a 'learning partnership' and were led by the same headteacher.

Outcomes

- Pupils in both schools make at least good progress in their learning. Levels of attainment differ in each school. In the first year of the federation, teachers' assessments indicate that above average attainment at Key Stage 2 in Montenev School was sustained. In the same period in Fox Hill School, although attainment remained low, there were improvements in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and in English at Key Stage 2. Assessment information provided by the federation shows that the attainment of current pupils across this school is rising steadily. Nonetheless, results in writing at Key Stage 1 are weaker than those in other subjects in both schools.
- Behaviour is good. It has continued to improve in Fox Hill School due to the consistent application of the federation's behaviour management policies and because expectations of behaviour have been raised. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. In Fox Hill School, these have improved due to regular 'standards weeks' where the federation's expectations of behaviour and work are explained to pupils.
- Pupils' attendance is below average but has begun to rise in both schools, due to a federation-wide drive to improve it.

Provision

- The quality of teaching across the federation has risen as a result of a relentless focus by its leaders on improving teaching, particularly in Fox Hill School. They have used a combination of coaching, specific training and a rigorous monitoring programme to bring this about.
- The curriculum has improved, especially at Fox Hill School, partly because of improvements to, and better use of, its buildings. Links between teachers in each school have been well used to devise activities that are more relevant and interesting for pupils. The schools' joint resources have enabled an additional modern language to be taught and created better opportunities for pupils to learn dance and music.
- The quality of care, guidance and support has improved in one school as a result of the adoption of a pastoral scheme taught in its partner school and because pastoral support workers now work across both settings.

Leadership and management

- The executive headteacher and her leadership team, supported by an experienced governing body, provide clear direction for the federation. Consequently, the morale of staff is high. Staffing at Fox Hill School has been further stabilised and weaknesses in teaching there robustly tackled. Expectations of what can be achieved by all pupils have been raised. Challenging targets, based on the good use of data, have accelerated the good progress made by pupils at Fox Hill School. Potential barriers to

successful federation, such as the initial concerns of some staff and parents were successfully allayed through extensive consultation.

- Good communications ensure that staff, governors and parents are well informed about developments in the federation. The level of information about pupils' progress provided to parents at Fox Hill School has increased. The use of both schools for parents' courses has created greater opportunities for parents to learn how they can help with their child's learning.
- Effective arrangements to enable collaboration between staff in each school have developed teachers' and subject leaders' skills. Much good practice has been shared and key policies to improve learning have been agreed and implemented which have contributed to pupils' good progress.
- Strategic planning is underpinned by discrete plans for each school focusing on their specific needs. It takes good account of the resources offered by the local authority and the local family of schools.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising attainment at Fox Hill School so that pupils in both schools attain equally well
- improving attendance.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the leadership of the federation.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection.

Yours sincerely

Michael McIlroy
Her Majesty's Inspector