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10 December 2010

Mr D Horrigan
Headteacher
Maltby Redwood Junior and Infant School
Redwood Drive
Maltby
Rotherham
S66 8DL

Dear Mr Horrigan

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Maltby Redwood Junior and Infant School

Following my visit to your school on 8 and 9 December 2010, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in January 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. 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 – satisfactory

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Rotherham.

Yours sincerely

Katrina Gueli
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2010.

- Raise standards and ensure better and more consistent achievement of pupils across the school, especially at Key Stage 2, by:
 - using information from the tracking of pupils' progress to ensure work in lessons meets all pupils' needs
 - ensuring leaders and teachers use tracking information to decide which pupils need additional support and to provide that support
 - using targets with individuals and groups of pupils to help them understand what they are aiming for and how to reach it.

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching across the school by:
 - ensuring a greater focus on promoting the learning of all groups of pupils when planning and delivering lessons
 - eradicating inadequate teaching
 - providing sufficient opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in their learning and promoting greater enjoyment of lessons
 - giving clear guidance to pupils about the steps they need to take to improve their work through marking work
 - ensuring the taught curriculum matches more closely that which is planned.

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels accept and carry out monitoring and leading improvement in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels understand how to monitor and evaluate effectively.

- Improve governance by:
 - ensuring that the governing body is better informed about how to monitor the school's effectiveness
 - ensuring the governing body holds the school to account for its performance more rigorously and monitors the effectiveness of its own practice.

Special measures: monitoring of Maltby Redwood Junior and Infant School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 8 and 9 December 2010

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work including six part lessons, scrutinised documents and pupils' work, and met with the headteacher, other leaders, a group of pupils, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body and representatives from the local authority.

Context

At the time of this monitoring inspection two teachers were absent due to ill health and both of these colleagues will leave the school at the end of December 2010. The role of special educational needs coordinator is now shared by two members of the senior leadership team. One experienced teacher has joined the school on a temporary contract until August 2011. Due to a decline in the number of pupils joining the school, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now together in one class. The acting Chair of the Governing Body at the time of the last monitoring inspection has been formally elected. In addition, a new vice-chair of the governing body has taken up post.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

Recently published contextualised progress measures for the 2010 Year 6 cohort confirmed that pupils' progress in mathematics had improved and was broadly satisfactory relative to their starting points, reflecting the higher teaching quality for Year 6 pupils during their final two terms in the school. However, despite a significant rise in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in English, overall their progress in this subject remained significantly below that expected. Although teaching in this subject was also of a consistently good quality, the legacy of underperformance of these pupils earlier in the key stage was too great to be effectively tackled during Year 6. The school's own data show that in the large majority of cohorts pupils' progress has accelerated and the gap between their actual and expected attainment is being narrowed. The school has rightly identified that improving the performance of boys remains a priority and steps have already been taken to develop the curriculum and approaches to teaching to promote boys' engagement and progress further.

Pupils' progress was good in half of the lessons seen during the inspection and there were no lessons where progress was inadequate. An increasing number of pupils are showing high levels of enjoyment and a willingness to do their best work particularly when the learning is placed in an interesting cross-curricular context and teaching incorporates challenging, active approaches. However, a small minority of pupils are

still too passive or easily distracted especially when they are required to be active listeners or to engage in paired discussions.

Processes to set targets for individuals and groups have been refined further to ensure a greater degree of challenge. Half-termly review meetings to discuss the progress of individual pupils continue to be effective in ensuring that leaders and class teachers identify pupils who are making less than expected progress and the reasons for their underperformance. Carefully chosen academic and pastoral interventions are increasingly helping to remove barriers to pupils' achievement.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the area for improvement:

- Raise standards and ensure better and more consistent achievement of pupils across the school, especially at Key Stage 2 – satisfactory

The effectiveness of provision

The accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' progress and the subsequent use of this information has continued to develop. Consequently, the extent to which teachers' planning meets the needs of different learners is improving and increasingly tasks are providing a good degree of challenge. Teachers are also using assessment more sharply to pinpoint gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. This information is being used more consistently to adjust planning and to inform the content of 'basic skills' sessions to ensure all pupils have secure foundations on which to build in both numeracy and literacy. Support staff are making a more effective contribution to supporting learning in the classroom and when providing additional out-of-class activities to accelerate pupils' progress. The school's policy on the marking of pupils' work and the provision of written feedback has been reviewed and there is much greater consistency in providing pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work. However, there are still some missed opportunities to extend pupils' learning because pupils do not always have the opportunity to respond to written questions and challenges posed by teachers. The use of 'learning journeys' to link different areas of the curriculum is becoming more embedded. Nevertheless, the school is aware that further development is needed to ensure that these cross-curricular approaches enhance learning consistently well for all pupils.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the area for improvement:

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching across the school – satisfactory

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The rigour with which leaders are monitoring pupils' achievement and the quality of provision has significantly improved. There is wider leadership team involvement and a broader range of both informal and formal evidence is being collected. Consequently, evaluation is pinpointing strengths and weaknesses more sharply and

all members of the senior team have a deeper understanding of the progress that has been made and remaining priorities for development. However, in a minority of respects there is a need to shift the focus of evaluation more strongly towards judging the 'impact' rather than 'implementation' of improvement actions. Leaders' expectations are clearly communicated to all staff and there is a strong shared commitment to ensuring that the necessary improvement to outcomes and provision is rapid but sustainable. The use of pupil progress data and challenging targets to raise attainment is becoming more embedded and class teachers are being more robustly held to account for securing better progress. Senior leadership team members are increasingly leading whole-school developments in both teaching and learning and curriculum provision as their confidence and skills develop. This work is further enhanced through the good use of external partnerships, for example, to build leadership capacity and increase staff confidence in the use of information and communication technology to support learning.

Governors are developing their ability to support the strategic direction of the school including identifying aspects where they can directly contribute to driving improvement. Underpinning this improvement has been the commitment of governors to developing their own knowledge and understanding through both formal and informal training opportunities. Governors also have a much higher profile within school and this is helping to ensure they have a greater understanding of the school's progress and are better placed to challenge underperformance. Committees are functioning more effectively because they have a clearer understanding of performance data and they are better informed through more accurate reporting from school leaders.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve leadership and management – good
- Improve governance – good

External support

Local authority support continues to be effective in promoting the school's improvement. The school is appreciative of the support to date, particularly in brokering partnerships to develop teaching, build leadership capacity and to manage long-term staff absences. Monthly meetings of the school's 'project group' are used effectively to evaluate progress and tailor external support to meet the school's changing needs and developing capacity to improve.