

Serco Inspections
Cedar House
21 William Street
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 1LH

OFSTED
T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

SERCO
Direct T 0121 683 3888



10 February 2011

Mrs J Daniels
Ravensthorpe Primary School
Brigstock Court
Peterborough
PE3 7NB

Dear Mrs Daniels

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Ravensthorpe Primary School

Following my visit with Veronica Young, additional inspector, to your school on 8 and 9 February 2011, 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection are 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.

Newly Qualified Teachers may not be appointed.

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 Peterborough.

Yours sincerely

Nada Trikic
Her Majesty's Inspector



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Annex

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

- Raise standards of attainment so that the proportion of pupils reaching the level expected for their age at the end of Year 6 is consistently in line with the national average by:
 - ensuring pupils who fall behind are identified quickly and given additional support so they make rapid progress in their learning
 - ensuring all teaching is matched to the full range of learners' needs and abilities
 - ensuring marking and feedback enable pupils to improve their work
 - providing regular opportunities to read and analyse texts for a variety of purposes.
- Improve the curriculum so it meets the needs and interests of all pupils by:
 - developing and sharing a curriculum overview that shows how pupils will develop core skills across different subjects
 - ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to learn through interesting experiences
 - ensuring that dual-language resources are available to support early reading in English for pupils who speak English as an additional language
 - providing opportunities for pupils to develop their information and communication technology skills in different subjects
 - providing challenging opportunities for pupils to solve problems, develop arguments and consider open-ended questions.
- Improve leadership at all levels so leaders, managers and governors effectively drive school improvement based on accurate self-evaluation by:
 - developing the skills of the governing body so that it provides appropriate challenge and is fully aware of its statutory duties
 - increasing capacity at the most senior level so the school's self-evaluation is based on accurate analysis of evidence and leads to clear school improvement planning
 - developing a clear vision so that middle leaders understand what is expected of them and receive appropriate guidance and support in fulfilling their roles.



Special measures: monitoring of Ravensthorpe Primary School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 8 and 9 February 2011

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher, members of staff, two representatives of the governing body, a group of pupils, and the Head of School Improvement and Senior School Improvement Adviser from the local authority.

Context

Following the inspection the headteacher was granted leave prior to retirement at the end of the autumn term. A temporary acting headteacher was appointed for two days per week. The deputy headteacher manages the school on the other days. One teacher left the school and has been replaced. An internal appointment was made for a Key Stage 2 leader in January 2011. Since the inspection membership of the governing body has changed. Two experienced governors and a clerk have been appointed to the governing body; three vacancies remain. A new headteacher has been appointed and will take up his post in September 2011.

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

National test results for 2010 show that attainment remains low for pupils in Year 6. The gap between the school's low standards and national expectations is much wider for girls than boys in English and mathematics. Too few pupils attain the higher levels. This is the result of the variable rates of progress as pupils move through Key Stage 2, together with weaknesses in the tracking and evaluation of progress, and use of assessment information. This year, however, assessment information is gathered and analysed more systematically so that the school is now well placed to improve teaching and learning, and rates of progress.

Important steps have been taken to tackle inconsistencies in the assessment of pupils' work. Targets have been reviewed and revised to raise the level of challenge. Although the school's recent analysis of progress indicates a mixed picture across year groups, pupils who are underperforming are clearly identified. The implementation of intervention strategies in literacy and numeracy are now targeted more effectively to help pupils to catch up. Close monitoring by local authority consultants and subject leaders reveal encouraging early progress. In class, pupils are not sufficiently aware of their individual learning targets or the specific skills to master in literacy and numeracy to improve the quality of their work. A marking policy is now in place to support greater consistency in feedback to pupils. A review of pupils' work shows that time is beginning to be set aside to enable pupils to act on this guidance.



The quality of pupils' learning varies too widely. In the best lessons, pupils are able to work at their own level with the right amount of challenge and support. Pupils respond positively when learning objectives are shared in a child-friendly language and when given the opportunity to discuss their learning. In the large majority of lessons, the quality of learning for most groups is satisfactory because the teacher does not take enough account of pupils' diverse learning needs. Lesson plans usually include a record of pupils who speak English as an additional language, new arrivals to the country or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, but individual needs are not incorporated well enough to provide a sequence of differentiated learning tasks.

Teachers have been successful in extending the range of activities in lessons to engage pupils in problem-solving and learning challenges. Pupils enjoy their lessons; relationships with teachers are good. Pupils have more opportunities to read and analyse texts. However, the effectiveness of guided reading sessions is too variable. Pupils usually cooperate well with the range of group activities but they do not always understand the purpose of a task and how it will improve their reading skills. A recent change to specialist teaching in English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 has been welcomed by pupils as lessons provide a better match to their needs.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Raise standards of attainment so that the proportion of pupils reaching the level expected for their age at the end of Year 6 is consistently in line with the national average – satisfactory.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to their learning. This is reflected in above average attendance rates. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and enjoy collaborating in pairs and small groups. However, in a small minority of lessons pupils lose concentration when the teaching lacks pace, or when the teacher talks for too long. Pupils are increasingly involved in sharing their views and contributing to the school community. They are particularly proud of their involvement in the appointing of the new headteacher.

The effectiveness of provision

Since the last inspection, time has been invested in improving the quality of teaching through regular training sessions. Teachers now have higher expectations of what pupils should achieve. Teachers' confidence to assess pupils' attainment is improving because staff are working together regularly to moderate their judgements. This is helping them to understand the evidence required to determine the level of pupils' work. Teachers are beginning to use National Curriculum levels to plan work for groups of learners. Further refinement is needed to meet individual needs, to take



account of gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, and to include steps for progression that pupils understand.

Only a small minority of lessons were judged as good or outstanding. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations for the different ability groups they teach and develop pupils' learning through open-ended questions. Where teaching is satisfactory the teacher sometimes talks for too long and lesson objectives are not focused clearly enough on what pupils will learn. Pupils' learning is not checked well enough to identify where additional help is needed or when pupils can be moved on to accelerate their progress. When teachers incorporate the deployment of teaching assistants in their planning, they make a valuable contribution to the learning of named pupils or small groups. Provision and support for pupils at an early stage of learning English is variable. Although there is now access to dual language resources, teachers' skills in providing for diverse language needs are underdeveloped.

The school has successfully increased opportunities for pupils to develop their core skills across different subjects. Themes have been agreed to increase cross-curricular work to promote active involvement, excitement, pace and challenge. Good examples were observed of integrated approaches involving literacy and information and communication technology in Year 2, and music in Year 5. Pupils appreciate the increased opportunities for practical tasks. Relationships among pupils are harmonious and there is a strong sense of mutual care and support.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve the curriculum so it meets the needs and interests of all pupils – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The acting headteacher has been successful in raising staff morale and instilling a shared commitment and drive to improve. She has taken decisive action to restructure middle leadership, underpinned by clear roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability to build the school's capacity. Middle leaders have valued opportunities for training to develop the skills required for evaluating pupil progress and work scrutiny working alongside external consultants. Subject leaders for literacy and numeracy are growing in confidence and beginning to lead their own training and support of staff, especially in the standardisation of work. The role of key stage leaders is evolving to provide a clear view of standards in each year group. With the support of the acting headteacher, middle leaders are now producing summary reports to share with governors. Although these are helpful documents and an encouraging development, they do not provide an analysis for different groups of learners to support robust self-evaluation. Middle leaders are yet to receive training to extend their influence through classroom observation and coaching. Lesson observation is largely conducted by the acting headteacher. The



strategy for improving teaching quality has been primarily through training sessions to discuss the features of good teaching, progress tracking and planning. A more rigorous approach is needed to improve teaching quality to tackle the uneven rates of progress of the past.

The governing body has experienced turnover in membership since the inspection. However, action has been taken to strengthen the quality of its work through the appointment of experienced governors and a clerk, a thorough review of the committee structure and the setting of clear expectations. The Chair of the Governing Body demonstrates a high level of commitment and has driven the changes necessary to enable the governing body to fulfil its responsibilities. Link governors have been identified to monitor the development plan and aspects of the school's work. Further training and support is required so that governors have the skills and confidence to fulfil these roles. The governing body has been successful in appointing a headteacher from the start of the next academic year.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve leadership at all levels so leaders, managers and governors effectively drive school improvement based on accurate self-evaluation – satisfactory.

External support

The local authority's statement of action provides a suitable programme of support for the school, including guidance for middle leaders, the governing body and teachers. The local authority acted swiftly to appoint an acting headteacher, a clerk to the governing body and two experienced governors to bring relevant expertise to the school. Specific support for subject and key stage leaders has been well received to enable staff to develop their leadership skills. The modelling of pupil progress meetings has been especially helpful in building the school's capacity to improve. The acting headteacher, advisers and consultants work very effectively together to identify the most appropriate external support to meet the school's needs.

Priorities for further improvement

- Agree and implement a strategy to strengthen the quality of teachers' planning and delivery to meet the diverse needs of pupils.
- Share learning targets with pupils so they understand the skills they need to master, and how they can improve.
- Increase the level of training and support for the governing body to enable its members to carry out their duties confidently and effectively.

