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17 March 2011

Mr I Yapp
Headteacher
Tadcaster, Riverside Community Primary School
Wetherby Road
Tadcaster
North Yorkshire
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Dear Mr Yapp,

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Tadcaster, Riverside Community Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 16 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection and the on-site preparation visit. Please pass on my thanks to the staff, member of the governing body, School Improvement Partner and pupils who gave up time to talk to me.

The substantive deputy headteacher is currently on a secondment to another school in the local authority, an existing middle leader from Early Years has taken up a responsibility as acting deputy headteacher in the interim period until her return. A small number of teachers and teaching staff are new to the school since the last inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 30 November and 1 December 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

End of Key Stage 2 outcomes in 2010 together with evidence seen during the monitoring visit indicate that attainment in English and mathematics has shown improvement since the last inspection. Key Stage 1 assessment data indicate that attainment remains above average which is reflected in an upward trend over a five year period. All improvements are linked to greater consistency in the quality of teaching, together with effective use of more-accurate assessments of pupil progress. Developed with the assistance of the local authority, systems to monitor pupil progress are becoming embedded in practice throughout the school. Regular scrutiny of this data enables senior leaders to act swiftly to deal with remaining pockets of underperformance.

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Developing pupils' independence as learners is evident in the majority of lessons. Pupils are able to sustain their concentration and remain on task for lengthy periods, producing good quality work independently. In some lessons, teachers' planning focuses on the needs of individuals and groups based on accurate assessments. In these lessons pupils are challenged to reach the next level and understand how they will achieve the learning outcomes. Where weaknesses remain, teachers' planning is too general and based on tasks to be completed rather than learning outcomes based on pupil assessments. Pupils show some awareness of their own targets, particularly where good quality marking of their work guides them to reach the next level. This is at an early stage of development and practice varies between classes, meaning that some pupils remain unclear as to how they might improve. Equally, pupils' ability to assess how well they are doing or to make comments on the progress of their peers is at an early stage of development.

The formation of an inclusion team, led by an experienced and enthusiastic manager, ensures more-accurate identification of pupils with special needs and or disabilities. The effectiveness of specific, targeted support is regularly monitored for its effectiveness in meeting their individual needs.

A systematic and robust programme of monitoring in lessons ensures that senior leaders in the school have an increasingly accurate profile on the quality of teaching and learning. Effective support from the local authority has enabled the role of middle leaders to be developed through training in how to conduct lesson observations. Outcomes of both monitoring and pupil progress meetings are discussed regularly by members of the leadership team. All staff are increasingly accepting of their accountability for the progress made by pupils in their care. The teaching and learning committee of the governing body receives regular feedback on the progress in this area from the headteacher. This information now feeds directly into the strategic development plan for the school, with the need to improve the quality of teaching further being a key priority.

The school's capacity for sustaining improvements is good as demonstrated by the rigour and enthusiasm with which senior and middle leaders are tackling underperformance. Most notably is their drive to ensure consistent rates of progress for all pupils throughout the school. A thorough audit of the senior leadership team by the local authority led to a restructuring with new roles and responsibilities for some. Despite being new to their posts, all have embraced systems to track pupil progress and to hold their colleagues and themselves to account. Of particular note is the effectiveness of team teaching, providing middle leaders with the opportunity to work with colleagues to bring about specific improvements. They engage confidently in scrutiny of pupils' work, monitoring of pupil progress and lesson observations. An ethos of open dialogue and sharing of good practice among professionals is key to the ambition of bringing about improvements across the school. The results of monitoring enable senior leaders and governors to prioritise issues to include in the school development planning. The robust system to monitor and track pupil progress enables governors to set challenging targets for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. There is strong evidence that Year 6 pupils will attain their target this year.

This monitoring inspection included a check on the school's safeguarding procedures and found them to be secure and meeting current requirements.

The school has received effective support from the local authority in bringing about their improvements.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mr James Kilner
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 30 November 2009 – 1 December 2009

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching by:
 - ensuring there are systems in place to share the good practice that exists in the school
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to work independently in lessons.

- Improve the quality of assessment across the school by:
 - ensuring all pupils receive clear advice on how to improve their work
 - helping pupils learn through assessing their own and each other's work.

- Developing monitoring and evaluation systems to:
 - improve the tracking of pupils' progress and set targets
 - develop the skills of middle leaders so that they are better able to monitor progress and swiftly arrest any underachievement by pupils
 - ensure the monitoring of teaching is accurate, detailed and objective.