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21 March 2011

Miss Nicki Ellwand
Acting headteacher
Pontefract the Rookeries Carleton Junior and Infant School
Carleton Road
Carleton
Pontefract
West Yorkshire
WF8 3NP

Dear Miss Ellwand,

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Pontefract the Rookeries Carleton Junior and Infant School

Following my visit to your school on 17 and 18 March 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 third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in November 2009. 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

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. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Wakefield.

Yours sincerely

Liz Godman
Additional Inspector

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2009.

- Raise achievement and standards in all subjects by:
 - ensuring all lessons lead to good or better progress for all pupils
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning in lessons
 - making lessons more challenging, particularly for pupils of middle and high ability
 - improving the curriculum so that pupils have more opportunities to develop their literacy skills, including speaking and listening, across all subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment by:
 - ensuring lessons are engaging and well matched to the needs of all pupils
 - identifying more opportunities to assess pupils in lessons
 - sharpening the quality of advice and guidance given to pupils so they are left in no doubt how they should improve their work
 - improving the accuracy, consistency and quality of marking across the school.
- Ensure leaders and managers drive improvements by:
 - ensuring monitoring and evaluation systems are accurate in identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses
 - ensuring that the school development plans are precise in addressing improvements
 - establishing consistency of practice across all classrooms, so that good and outstanding practice is shared
 - enabling staff to understand assessment data and use it effectively in the classroom to plan work which challenges all pupils
 - giving governors more accurate information about the school so that they are in a better position to hold it to account for its effectiveness.

Special measures: monitoring of Pontefract the Rookeries Carleton Junior and Infant School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 17 and 18 March 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive and acting headteachers, groups of pupils, a group of parents and carers and two representatives of the local authority. She held a telephone conversation with the Chair of the Interim Executive Board.

Context

The substantive headteacher has resigned since the last monitoring inspection. There has been a further change of teacher in Year 3 and the Year 4 teacher continues to be on long-term absence. The accommodation for the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 has been extended.

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

Progress in lessons continues to improve, particularly in the Reception class and Year 1. In these classes, the extended space provides greater opportunities for pupils to be independent and to investigate. For example, Year 1 pupils worked indoors and outside to test materials to find a waterproof roof for the 'three little pigs' house'. Progress has started to accelerate sharply in Year 3 because of the teacher's higher expectations of both achievement and behaviour. In the other years, progress in lessons is improving steadily due to consistently better teaching. Some pupils who were unsettled at the last monitoring inspection show improved attitudes and behaviour and, consequently, better progress. The skills of most pupils are more secure. However, occasionally, higher attaining pupils are eager to move on but are held back as they wait for others to catch up. For many, working in groups is improving their progress. Sometimes, though, some pupils are easily distracted or content to let others complete the task.

There are more opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own learning, giving them a clearer understanding of their achievement. Many are more able to articulate this. Some pupils are starting to consider the next steps, although sometimes these lack detail or are not recorded, so are in danger of being forgotten by the next lesson. Although there is some evidence of pupils applying literacy skills across the curriculum, this remains under-developed.

Work in pupils' books and the school's tracking data indicate that writing persists as a weaker area in Years 2 to 6. The data also shows variable improvement in reading and

mathematics. The more rigorous assessment and tracking data for Year 6 confirm that the proportion of pupils working at the expected or higher levels remains below average.

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

- raise achievement and standards in all subjects - satisfactory

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Behaviour in lessons continues to improve as more pupils are able to sustain concentration and to work with others. Pupils are making a better contribution to the life of the school and the community, for example, as helpers in school and through fund-raising for Comic Relief. These improvements are increasing their skills for the future.

The effectiveness of provision

There is a sharper match of work to pupils' needs, with greater attention to planning and organising activities to accommodate the full range within the class. Pupils are clearer about what they are going to learn and what they have to do to show this. Most lessons are more engaging and the pace is better. There was no evidence of the over-excitement or too much time spent listening to the teacher, noted at the last monitoring inspection. Support staff, including for the deaf and hearing-impaired pupils, continue to assist pupils' progress. Some show increasing initiative and skill in intervening and keeping learning on track.

The marking of pupils' work is better, with the next steps indicated more consistently. However, these steps do not always focus sufficiently on what the pupils should do to improve their skills. Assessment is more rigorous at the whole-school level and teachers' analysis of progress is giving a clearer picture of the variations in pupils' performance. This is used to target interventions and support with increasing accuracy. The school recognises that there remains work to do to develop the curriculum in order to enrich pupils' experiences.

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

- improve the quality of teaching and assessment - good

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Clearer definition of the roles of the school's leaders and managers is helping to drive improvement. The invaluable support of the executive headteacher has assisted the school in addressing some difficult staffing and pupil matters. This support has also allowed the acting headteacher to work in closer partnership with the deputy headteacher and senior staff from the National Support School. Sharing the highly effective practice from this school, has secured the greater consistency in teaching and the more accurate assessment of pupils' attainment and progress. These improvements provide a secure basis for accelerating pupils' progress further and for overcoming the legacy of underachievement, still evident in Key Stage 2.

Increasingly sharper monitoring and evaluation give the school a better understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, support is targeted more closely according to the greatest need. Staff are more aware of how their teaching and pupils' learning may be improved further. For example, in a recent review, class teachers identified the gaps in pupils' skills in English and mathematics with growing accuracy.

The members of the Interim Executive Board are giving stronger guidance in aspects where they have particular expertise, for example, premises and finance. This is enabling leaders and managers to concentrate more closely on improving teaching and learning.

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

- ensure leaders and managers drive improvements - good

External support

The local authority continues to give good support which is improving the school's performance, particularly through the National Support School and the National Leader of Education. The school improvement advisers are also playing a key role in ensuring that improvements remain on track and actions are having the necessary impact.