

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

Ofsted
T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Serco
Direct T 0121 683 3888



10 June 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 to your school on 8 and 9 June 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 second 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.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

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

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 second monitoring inspection on 8 and 9 June 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, including 18 part-lessons, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher, members of staff, three 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

The deputy headteacher relinquished her teaching commitment in May 2011 to assume full-time leadership and management responsibilities for the remainder of the summer term. The temporary acting headteacher has reduced her commitment in the school to one day per week. There are transition arrangements to support the transfer of leadership responsibilities to the new headteacher, commencing September, 2011. Three vacancies remain on the governing body. An experienced supply teacher has been appointed for the Year 1 class for the summer term. A senior teaching assistant has been appointed internally as part of the revised management structure.

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

The rate at which pupils are making progress in lessons has accelerated since the previous visit because the quality of teaching has improved. The moderation and standardisation of pupils' work in reading, writing and mathematics has strengthened the accuracy of teachers' assessment. It has also increased teachers' awareness of pupils' individual learning needs. The school's monitoring procedures have developed strongly to track and analyse the rates of progress for individuals and groups of learners. Detailed records of termly pupil progress meetings now set out precisely the progress made against individual targets. Where there is underperformance, class teachers identify potential barriers to better progress and, through discussion with key stage leaders, agree actions to take. This approach has been successful in raising expectations and in strengthening accountability through a shared approach to improvement. Clear messages about remaining pockets of underachievement are identified to inform planning and targeted action. A wide range of flexible intervention programmes delivered by teaching assistants to individuals and groups of pupils are sharply focused on specific skills, and these are closely monitored. School data indicates that the effective use of intervention, including one-to-one tuition has helped to boost standards in Year 6 this year.

The quality of pupils' learning experiences has improved because assessment information is used increasingly to plan lessons to meet pupils' diverse needs. Good progress was observed where teachers provided a variety of tasks to match pupils'

identified learning needs. This was particularly successful when teaching assistants were deployed throughout the lesson to support learning. The marking policy is now used with greater consistency, with helpful feedback and guidance for pupils. Learning and progress remain satisfactory where the same task is set for the wide range of individual needs and abilities. The language and learning needs of pupils, who speak English as an additional language, are not routinely considered in the planning and delivery of lessons. A common assessment framework has been introduced recently but this is not yet embedded to drive provision across all classes. Pupils enjoy and value the opportunity to discuss their learning in pairs and small groups. However, there are too few opportunities for extended oral work to promote confidence and the use and development of language skills.

Progress since the last monitoring 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 – good.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

The pupils are responding positively to improvements in the quality of teaching. This is evident in their positive attitudes to learning, good relationships with staff, and improved levels of concentration. Opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and progress are increasing through the introduction of personal learning targets. Pupils show respect towards each other and learn to appreciate different languages and cultures. Attendance has dipped slightly this year and is identified as a school priority for action.

The effectiveness of provision

Since the last visit, the emphasis has been on developing features of good teaching through the effective use of assessment to inform lesson planning. Training has been successful in increasing the proportion of good teaching. Lesson objectives are now routinely shared with pupils and, in most cases, discussed so that lessons have a clear purpose. Teachers are taking time to explain how the pupils can measure their own progress. Success is shown in improved levels of engagement in all classes. In the best lessons, success criteria are matched to pupils' different capabilities to provide appropriate levels of challenge, with frequent opportunities to reflect on progress. For example, in an English lesson, pupils appreciated the importance of drafting and redrafting a letter to improve the quality of their work. Peer support and prompts on the 'working wall' promoted independent working and pupils' responsibility for learning. Teachers have instilled a greater sense of urgency in lessons; expectations have been raised. The use of investigations and problem solving to provide interest and challenge for pupils continues to develop. This works well when the transition between whole-class teaching and individual work is carefully planned. On occasions, learning falters because the task is too challenging and pupils lack the necessary skills and confidence to be successful independent

learners. Not enough time is allocated for pupils to discuss the work and the best learning strategies to use.

The quality of guided reading sessions has improved, with pupils involved in a wider range of purposeful activities to use and apply their skills. They particularly enjoy dictionary work where they find definitions of unfamiliar words linked to their science or topic work. Teachers are continuing to refine the tasks to secure further improvement in reading skills.

Curriculum targets have been introduced for literacy and numeracy. These are shared with pupils, and their parents and carers. Reference to these targets is increasing in lessons, supported by classroom displays. Although this development is at an early stage, many pupils are able to explain their targets and how they are helping them to improve their work. This is particularly effective when opportunities are created for pupils to demonstrate their developing skills and receive swift feedback on their achievements. This process is not embedded across the school. Class teachers incorporate opportunities for the progression of skills in their medium-term planning but this is yet to develop into a coherent framework for the curriculum across the school.

Recent training on meeting the learning and language needs of the above average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, including new arrivals, has helped to raise staff awareness. Specific phonic sessions, individual and small group sessions and in-class support are helpful aspects of provision. Resources have improved, including access to netbooks and laptops to assist with translation. However, this aspect of the school's work remains underdeveloped because teachers' lesson plans do not always take enough account of pupils' language needs.

Progress since the last monitoring 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

Leadership at all levels has strengthened since the previous visit. This is a result of good quality external coaching and support, for key stage and subject leaders, and the determined approach of the acting headteacher. The leadership structure is now underpinned by regular senior leadership, key stage and teaching assistant meetings to review and support progress.

Having worked alongside consultants to complete planning and work scrutiny, literacy and numeracy leaders are beginning to undertake these tasks independently and to share feedback with staff. The next step is to scrutinise planning beyond the literacy and numeracy sessions to ensure that there are good opportunities through cross-curricular work for pupils to develop their skills. Evidence gathered is now providing an accurate picture to support self-evaluation and to identify priorities. Key

stage leaders are now taking the lead role in pupil progress meetings with staff, observed by local authority advisers. Records are of good quality, with analysis of progress by gender, eligibility for free school meals, English as an additional language, and special educational needs. This approach is supporting effective intervention to tackle underperformance. Training has commenced to develop skills for classroom observation and coaching to strengthen internal capacity.

Teaching assistants now attend regular training and, with the introduction of a senior post, performance management has been introduced to support the development and sharing of skills, experience and expertise.

The governing body has made good use of local authority training on roles and responsibilities. It has established the protocols necessary for conducting monitoring visits. Governor links have been confirmed and a number of successful visits taken place. For example, two governors attended staff training on the use of learning objectives and success criteria. This was followed by a monitoring visit a few weeks later to see how teachers were implementing this approach. Reports are now written and presented to the full governing body. The Chair of the Governing Body has set high expectations for the involvement of governors in the work of the school.

Progress since the last monitoring 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 – good.

External support

External advisers and subject consultants have provided valuable coaching to key stage and subject leaders to further develop their knowledge, skills and confidence in producing in-depth analysis of pupil work and their progress, and teachers' planning. This has strengthened accountability for pupil progress as a basis for key stage leaders' meetings with class teachers. Training for the governing body has been effective in developing a sharper monitoring role. Following the previous monitoring visit, the local authority carried out a review to evaluate progress on the points raised. This served to identify areas of improvement and to refine the school's priorities. Further training for classroom observation is planned. The Head of School Improvement has taken a lead role in coordinating the transition to new school leadership for September 2011.

Priorities for further improvement

- Strengthen provision for pupils learning English as an additional language so that their needs are assessed and met swiftly through appropriate planning, delivery and progress tracking.