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Mr Staddon
Headteacher
Rykneld Primary School
Main Street
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Dear Mr Staddon

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Rykneld Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 6 July 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils, staff, and representatives from the governing body and local authority for the time they gave to meet with me.

Since the school was last inspected in March 2010, there have been a number of changes in staffing. A new deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher were appointed in September 2010 and you took up your post as headteacher in April 2011.

As a result of the inspection on 24 March 2010, 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Since the last inspection, the school has placed a greater emphasis on improving the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels and driving forward school improvement. In particular, robust systems have been introduced to keep a close eye on the progress made by different groups of pupils. Through regular training and moderation, teachers are able to assess pupils' work with much greater accuracy. As a result, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly in line with national averages and are continuing to rise. In addition, a greater proportion of pupils across the school are making at least satisfactory progress and some groups are making accelerated progress.

September 2010



Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage join the school with skills that are below those expected for their age and make good progress in most areas of learning. By the time they join Year 1, attainment is broadly in line with the expected level for their age. The latest school data indicate that a greater proportion of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are making at least the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the school recognises that there is still work to be done to improve rates of progress across the school. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 5 are making accelerated progress in mathematics and satisfactory progress in writing. In Year 6, pupils are making accelerated progress in writing and satisfactory progress in mathematics. Despite the variability in rates of progress, standards are beginning to rise. The latest unvalidated data for the 2011 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that a greater proportion of pupils are reaching the higher levels in writing. At the end of Year 2, the latest moderated teacher assessments indicate that standards have improved by 6% in writing and 14% in mathematics at Level 2B+.

The quality of teaching is improving and this is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. The majority of lessons observed during the monitoring visit were judged to be good. Lessons are focused on clear learning objectives and teachers are using accurate up-to-date assessment information to plan activities suitably matched to the needs of the pupils. In lessons, relationships are positive and pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. In the best lessons observed, teachers used a range of strategies to engage pupils fully in their learning, such as the use of mini-whiteboards and partner talk. Teachers provide interesting activities, such as practical work in mathematics, to engage and challenge pupils. For example, pupils in Year 3 enjoyed learning about 'The Angles Family' in a fun interactive whiteboard presentation to help them recognise different types of angles. On occasion, teachers talk too much in lessons and this limits pupils' opportunities to practise their writing skills and reflect on their learning. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning through their professional and caring support.

Assessment is used increasingly effectively to set targets for different groups of pupils. English and mathematics leaders have carefully analysed the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and have set appropriate targets for improvement. Individual targets are at an early stage of development. Work is regularly marked and teachers provide useful guidance to help pupils improve. Pupils report that they find marking comments helpful and, as a result, they have a better understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.

The headteacher and senior leadership team have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. There is a robust determination and palpable sense of urgency across the senior team in driving forward school improvement. The work of the school is rigorously monitored and evaluated through lesson observations, book trawls and discussions with pupils. Subject leaders have

received training and support from senior leaders, the local authority and external consultants to develop their roles. In a relatively short space of time, leaders and managers across the school have made a positive impact on improving outcomes for pupils. Consequently, progress in this area of improvement and the school's capacity to improve further are judged to be good.

The school values the support from the local authority. Training has been provided, as requested by the school, and has been helpful in addressing areas of weakness. The impact of this support has been satisfactory. During the inspection, safeguarding procedures were checked and found to meet the latest requirements.

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

Marian Harker
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Increase the rate of progress in writing and mathematics by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can understand and achieve
 - improving marking to give clear guidance for improvement.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better across the school, by ensuring that:
 - assessments of pupils' levels of achievement are used to plan effectively so that all groups make good progress
 - pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work.

- Ensure that leaders at all levels are involved in driving school improvement by:
 - focusing on pupils' progress and attainment
 - addressing priorities for development more quickly.