

PROTECT-INSPECTION

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Mrs Rockliff
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Rockliff

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

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 16 November 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, your Area Improvement Partner, the Chair and the vice-chair of the Governing Body.

As a result of the inspection on 27 April 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 good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Since the last inspection, the school has experienced an increase in the number of pupils on roll and undergone significant staffing changes. Most notably over half the number of teachers are new to the school this year, three of whom are newly qualified. They receive good quality support from the school and the local authority and are showing much promise in the school's aim to raise the profile of teaching to a consistently good standard. Also, for the first time in many years the school was able to appoint a deputy headteacher in March 2011. In the short space of time since her appointment it is abundantly clear that much has been done to improve and strengthen the leadership and management of the school. For example, in close collaboration with the headteacher and the local authority, she has implemented a pupil assessment tracking system across the school. Through this system, moderated teacher assessments are recorded and coded according to the rate of progress made by pupils so that any emerging gaps can be spotted quickly. This enables senior leaders to deploy resources quickly and effectively to those pupils requiring additional support in order to close the gap in their performance. As a result there has been a significant reduction in the number of pupils requiring long-term additional support.

September 2011

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Inspection findings confirm the school's view that pupils are making faster progress, particularly in mathematics and reading. Although there have been improvements in writing the proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in the 2011 Key Stage 2 assessments was not as high as it could have been. Indications are that more pupils are on track to attain the higher levels in writing this year because teaching is much more directly focussed on individual needs. The teaching of letter formation to the youngest pupils in school, together with a focus on the teaching of phonics, is proving successful in raising levels of attainment. Throughout Key Stage 1, and particularly in Year 2, pupil progress in writing is now good. There has been a concerted effort to improve pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work. An insistence on a neat, legible cursive script in line with the recently introduced handwriting policy has borne fruit and good quality written work can be seen throughout the school.

The significant turnover of staff over the past year led to some stalling of efforts to achieve consistently good teaching across the school. However, the school has risen to the challenge and it is clear that the work already underway demonstrates good progress in tackling this area. Regular monitoring in classrooms, undertaken by senior leaders in close collaboration with the local authority, identifies strengths and areas for development for individual members of staff. The school is in a strong position to eradicate any teaching which could potentially lead to low achievement. To this end the school has several members of staff, rightly identified as outstanding practitioners, able to coach those teachers whose classroom practice requires improvement.

Teachers' marking generally guides pupils as to how to improve their work but there remain a few inconsistencies in pupils' understanding of exactly where they are in their learning. Equally, some pupils require more help than others in interpreting their teacher's comments as to how to improve their work further.

As a result of the improved profile of teaching, pupils are more confident when learning independently. Teachers plan specifically for pupils to have the time to explore their learning through a range of well-planned topics and themes which enhance their understanding of the wider world issues. For example Year 6 pupils studying the Second World War were able to speak knowledgeably and passionately about the injustices of the holocaust from their exploration of the text by John Boyne, 'The boy in the striped pajamas.' They relish the opportunities to undertake their own research and are adept in their use of information and communication technology.

The newly invigorated senior leadership team operates effectively in driving forward improvements in the school. This is the underlying reason why the school demonstrates good progress in its capacity to improve further.

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

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

Yours sincerely

James Kilner

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- By 2011 raise standards in writing by:
 - ensuring that by Year 6 pupils develop neat handwriting
 - hastening pupils' progress across Year 2
 - developing pupils' understanding of grammar, including sentence construction across the school.

- By 2011 improve teaching so it is at least consistently good by:
 - ensuring pupils understand their targets and their next steps in learning in literacy and numeracy
 - supporting teachers to take more responsibility for the monitoring of pupils' progress in their classes
 - providing enhanced opportunities for pupils' to become more independent in their learning
 - ensuring that planning directly matches the needs of different groups of pupils.