

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



24 February 2012

Mr M Wagstaff  
Headteacher  
Rawmarsh Rosehill Junior School  
Kilnhurst Road  
Rotherham  
S62 5QH

Dear Mr Wagstaff

### **Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: English**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 21 February 2012 to look at work in English.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and pupils; interviews with an external consultant and a member of the governing body; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is satisfactory.

### **Achievement in English**

Achievement in English is satisfactory.

- In 2010, at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment was well below average in writing and pupils had made slow progress. In reading, attainment was below average but pupils had made satisfactory progress. In 2011, pupils made improved progress in both reading and writing, although there was faster progress in reading than in writing. The proportion of pupils making expected progress in English was average. Attainment was average overall in English but with weaker performance in writing.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make varied progress across the year groups with satisfactory achievement overall. Increased awareness of the potential needs of pupils eligible for free

school meals has led to improved monitoring and support, resulting in satisfactory progress by current pupils.

### **Quality of teaching in English**

The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory.

- The teaching of writing has improved, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The teaching of sentences and paragraphs is more structured with explicit and precise explanation of what pupils are expected to do. This has enabled pupils to plan their writing better and to write at greater length. They have developed their understanding of how to construct complex sentences and sequence paragraphs. The improved use of whiteboards has helped pupils to use writing to make a quick and personal response and to work collaboratively. On occasion, paired writing on whiteboards allows some individuals to take a back seat.
- In good lessons observed, clear objectives focused clearly on particular aspects of writing. Well-structured short tasks used speaking effectively to involve pupils and develop their use of language for writing. The use of pictures successfully stimulated pupils' imagination and their independence in writing. In guided reading sessions, adults used a good range of questioning techniques to explore text and to promote reading. Where observed teaching was satisfactory, there was too much teacher talk and a few pupils became a little restless.
- During this school year, the accuracy of teacher assessment has improved as a result of systematic moderation within the school and with teachers from other schools. Assessments are used regularly to check the progress of pupils and to identify underachievement. Detailed assessment of pupils' reading promotes their progress. Baseline assessments have been introduced this year to measure the progress in developing skills in particular types of writing. Marking provides specific praise and areas for improvement.

### **Quality of the curriculum in English**

The quality of the curriculum in English is satisfactory.

- The curriculum has not provided sufficiently well-planned progression in writing. For example, Years 5 and 6 are currently at the same level in instructional writing. With the support of an external consultant, the curriculum in Years 5 and 6 has been revised with a more focussed approach to teaching and assessing different types of writing. This has begun to tackle identified weaknesses in writing in Years 5 and 6. In addition, the opportunities for different types of writing have been identified more systematically in the topic work in other subjects.
- Whole-school writing activities, including the annual literacy festival and the involvement of authors, provide a strong stimulus for writing and for presenting writing to a wider audience. Well-planned activities on residential visits enable pupils to write effectively about real experiences. Pupils' writing is promoted effectively in displays around school.

- Pupils receive systematic and positive encouragement to read at school and at home with adults. Weaker readers improve through their additional phonics sessions. Pupils enjoy role play and drama in English and the school's arts activities.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management in English**

The effectiveness of leadership and management in English is good.

- Leaders have focused well on key priorities and injected a greater sense of urgency with the introduction of short term plans to bring about specific changes. Leadership has been distributed more widely and senior leaders, the subject leader and other teaching and support staff regularly review the progress of pupils and identify improvements in teaching and learning. Data are analysed clearly and used accurately to evaluate progress. Governors have developed an effective role in monitoring and evaluation, for example through interviews with pupils and meetings with the literacy coordinator.
- This school year, effective use has been made of an external consultant to identify and bring about improvements in the teaching of writing. This is supported effectively by regular lesson observation, professional development and performance management reviews. This work has made a positive difference in Years 5 and 6 and is due to be extended next term.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- further improving attainment and progress in writing by continuing to strengthen teachers' subject knowledge and expertise in teaching writing at different ages and levels.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop English in the school.

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Bernard Campbell**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**