

PROTECT-INSPECTION



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Colin Fleetwood
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Fleetwood

Additional measures monitoring inspection of Haig Primary School

Following my visit with Jane Austin, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 19 and 20 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2012. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the School Governance Committee and the Chief Executive, Service Children's Education.

Yours sincerely

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Kekshan Salaria
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2012

- Improve teaching by:
 - asking questions that make pupils think
 - involving pupils more in their lessons by motivating them and making sure they understand the goals they are working towards and how these can be achieved.

- Raise pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics and improve the progress they make by ensuring that:
 - all teaching staff have an accurate knowledge and understanding of how to teach letters and sounds, and follow the methods agreed
 - pupils' mathematical understanding is developed step-by-step
 - class teachers plan lessons and group work at the right level for pupils of different abilities.

- Improve leadership at the highest level by ensuring that:
 - the headteacher is held accountable for the inadequacies of the school
 - swift action is taken to improve teaching where it is inadequate
 - thorough systems are introduced urgently to check and improve the performance of all teachers and learning support assistants
 - pupils' work is checked to provide an accurate picture of the standards they are reaching and the progress they are making over time
 - better use is made of the knowledge and expertise of the two deputy headteachers.

Report on the fourth monitoring inspection on 19 and 20 March 2014

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, two members of the School Governance Committee, including the Chair, and an inspector adviser from Service Children's Education. A telephone discussion was held with the Director of Education, Service Children's Education. Additionally, inspectors met with two groups of pupils. All lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Teachers' planning and pupils' work books were scrutinised during lesson observations.

Context

Five members of the teaching staff have left the school since the previous monitoring inspection and have been replaced with new appointments.

Achievement of pupils at the school

At the time of the previous monitoring inspection, achievement across the school was judged to be low. Currently, there are fluctuations in progress between year groups; however, pupils' progress is lifting in the majority of classes. The majority of teachers now focus clearly on the need to accelerate pupils' progress. However, in mathematics, some teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their mathematical skills through real-life, problem-solving activities. Senior leaders are ensuring data from tracking pupils' progress are now acted upon more swiftly to guide teachers' planning and the intervention programmes that support those pupils who need additional help.

Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage have settled very well to school routines and respond well to the teaching. This is because the Early Years Foundation Stage staff use assessments to quickly get to know children and their learning needs, and carefully plan their next steps in learning.

The quality of teaching

The headteacher has dealt robustly with inadequate teaching. Consequently inspectors saw a considerable improvement in the overall quality of teaching. However, there is still a way to go before teaching is of the consistently good quality that is needed to ensure good progress. No outstanding teaching was observed during this visit. Pupils' enthusiasm and the good relationships between adults and pupils across the school make a very positive contribution to effective learning.

The better lessons observed during this monitoring inspection have some common features. The 'steps to success', the stages for making good progress in each lesson,

are shared with pupils in a way they can easily understand. Pupils can see what they are aiming for and check their progress towards the goals. Imaginative resources are used to capture pupils' interest. For instance, in preparing to write about a Tudor prisoner in the Tower of London, Year 4 pupils' thinking was stimulated by artefacts such as bedding straw, candles and lanterns. Careful management and organisation ensure that good use is made of all the adults in the class; teaching assistants are well directed and clearly briefed by teachers so that they can contribute to pupils' learning.

Where teaching is less successful, tasks are not sufficiently tailored to the specific learning needs of all pupils, particularly, the most able pupils. They fail to engage or motivate pupils sufficiently or allow them to practise new learning in ways that helps them to make accelerated progress. During lessons some teachers are now encouraging pupils to assess what they have learned using a thumbs up or down system. While this is potentially valuable, during less successful lessons some teachers do not check the validity of these self-assessments or follow up pupils' misconceptions. In many lessons pupils are encouraged to participate in role play or to discuss work with a partner.

Teaching in mathematics is best in those lessons where there have been concerted efforts to focus on the language and numeracy skills required for mathematics. For example, In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, the teacher provided good challenge for all groups of pupils, frequently reviewing the learning of all throughout the lesson and adjusting the challenge or support as required, to optimise learning.

In both Foundation Stage 1 and Foundation Stage 2 the way staff plan and deliver learning shows notable improvement. Plans show clearly how adults will support children's learning, whether they are directing activities or supporting those that stem from the children's interests. Each aspect of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is planned for in detail and attached to diagnostic, daily evaluations of children's progress. These, in turn, inform further planned learning. Inspectors observed these aspects contributing directly to the better progress being made by children. In Foundation Stage 2, the outdoor space now provides a genuine extension to the indoor areas and is treated as an integral resource. The use of the outdoor facilities in Foundation 1 is not maximised and learning opportunities are being missed. The need to improve provision in Foundation1 is very well understood by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils report that they are much happier in school. They have an increased sense of pride in their work and the school. They recognise the changes taking place and are happy about them. Pupils behave well around the school and in lessons. They are polite and courteous to adults and show concern for one another. There is a wealth of equipment and games for pupils to choose from and this helps them to play well

together. Pupils are well supervised. They say they enjoy school and are enthusiastic about the extra-curricular activities on offer, such as the boys' choir and the information and technology club.

In lessons, pupils are enthusiastic learners who listen well and follow teachers' instructions promptly. Pupils show pride in their work which is presented well. They are making a concerted effort to improve their handwriting and are pleased when they receive a 'pen licence' and a handwriting pen. Where pupils have individual difficulties managing their own behaviour, staff know their needs well and provide good levels of support which enable them to re-engage with learning.

Attendance this year to date is broadly average. The school has changed its policy with regard to term-time holidays so that this more closely reflects new national requirements. Leaders have made parents aware of the changes and are monitoring pupils with high levels of absence assiduously.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The headteacher has successfully brought about a change of culture; staff morale is much improved. Staff work well in teams, for instance, across year groups and the senior leadership team is cohesive with clearly defined roles. Performance management targets for teaching and learning are now much sharper. Good practice has begun to be shared as teachers bring effective resources and strategies to 'Bring and Brag' staff meetings. Staff appreciate the clarity of direction that the senior leadership team is providing and the support and guidance they are receiving. Challenging targets have been set for pupils' progress across the school and a rigorous cycle of observations in classrooms has been implemented. Staff are provided with clear feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching. Despite their understandable concerns about the school requiring additional measures, many staff expressed their strong desire to work as a team and ensure the school improves as quickly as possible. However, the effectiveness of subject leaders remains varied; some are better placed than others to lead the necessary improvements.

Senior leaders meet with teachers each term to review each pupil's progress, ensuring that early signs of underachievement are dealt with promptly. Academic guidance is steadily improving but recent initiatives have not yet become fully embedded in everyday practice. For example, some pupils know and use their learning targets, while others are unclear about them. The Chair of the School Governance Committee (SGC) understands the school's strengths and weaknesses and knows that his role should provide senior leaders with both support and challenge. The school is moving forward. Staff are working hard to improve their practice. Senior leaders are aware they need to build on this momentum with rigour and urgency.

External support

Good quality input from Service Children's Education is having a positive impact on improving key aspects of the school's provision. This is sensibly delivered, to take account of the improvements already made and to address the remaining areas of weakness. The school continues to benefit from well-matched support from the Service Children's Education primary consultant. Her evaluations are accurate and insightful based on a thorough knowledge of the school's performance. School leaders are working towards not becoming overly dependent on this external source for support and guidance.