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21 February 2008

Mr David Rose
Hessle Penshurst Primary School
Winthorpe Road
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Dear Mr Rose

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF Hessle Penshurst Primary School

Following my visit with Terry Holland HMI and Anthony Pearson Additional Inspector, to your school on 20–21 February 2008, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in May 2007. 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. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State the chair of governors and the Director of Children's Services for East Riding of Yorkshire LA.

Yours sincerely

Joy Frost
H M Inspector

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF Hessle Penshurst Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 20–21 February 2008.

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, groups of pupils, staff, the acting deputy headteacher, and a representative from the local authority (LA).

Context

Since the last monitoring visit there have been a number of staff changes. Two full time members of staff, including the head of school and a part time teacher have been on long term sickness absence. The Year 5 teacher has stepped up to take over as acting deputy headteacher and is teaching mornings only. The school had difficulty covering one long term absence but a part time Year 2 teacher has agreed to work full time and has taken over the class. The headteacher of the federation is now carrying out the day-to-day management of the school on a full time basis. The Area Relationship Manager from the LA has been working in the school for two days a week. There are still some pupils and staff who are displaced from their homes or living in temporary accommodation due to the flooding in the area in June 2007.

Achievement and standards

Most pupils are now working at levels which are appropriate for their abilities. Assessment procedures have improved and are more accurate because a single format is being used across the school. Teachers are using the information obtained to inform lesson planning and adapt the work to provide an appropriate challenge for the different ability levels within the class. This is leading to better overall achievement in lessons. However, whilst underachievement of the lower attaining pupils in particular is being successfully tackled, some more able pupils are not always stretched as much as they could be.

Tracking procedures have been refined and a comprehensive system available to all staff is in place. Underachievement is more easily and quickly recognised and appropriate intervention strategies devised and put in place. For example, reading across the school has improved, markedly so for some pupils. This is because of the success of the guided reading scheme, supported by well selected resources and effective staff training. A pocket of Year 5 pupils underachieving in mathematics are now better equipped to make progress because of their participation in the 'pre-teaching' intervention programme. They appreciate the boost this has given to their performance. Pupils have a better understanding of their targets and what they need to do to reach them. They are keen to show how the recently devised and implemented 'I can do' progress sheets are used to record their achievement. This also motivates them well to improve.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in May 2007:

- Raise the achievement and standards of pupils in English, mathematics and science, particularly between Years 3 and 6 – satisfactory

Personal development and well-being

Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and around school generally. They enjoy their lessons and are very keen to take an active part by responding to or asking questions for themselves and working cooperatively with each other. A concern for and pride in the presentation of their work is evident across the ability and age range. Pupils enjoy and respond well to the opportunities provided to take responsibility within the school. In a Year 2 topic lesson, pupils were capable of rehearsing their group compositions for percussion without direct supervision by the teacher and remained well focused on this challenging and interesting activity. Older pupils are proud of their participation in the work of the effective school council and take part enthusiastically in the many extra-curricular activities the school offers. These include lunchtime booster sessions and the planned Easter revision session during the coming holidays.

Quality of provision

The school has focused on the issues for development from the last monitoring visit and as a result teaching and learning has improved. During the visit, no inadequate teaching was seen and an increasing amount was good. The systems put in place to improve learning are beginning to have an impact. Teachers use assessment data to plan lessons for different groups of pupils within the class which match better their capabilities. The use of data to identify underachievement and plan catch-up and intervention programmes has been successful. All pupils are now able to access the work set for them and make at least satisfactory progress in lessons. Teaching assistants have benefited from a good programme of training. This has resulted in the direct, focused teaching of small groups of targeted pupils in and outside of lessons which aids their learning and achievement.

Lesson planning is more detailed and the addition of an evaluation section at the end of each day has enabled teachers to refine and alter their planning during the week to ensure that all pupils are making the necessary progress. The amount of work seen in books is now appropriate and teachers expectations of how much pupils can do in a lesson has improved.

A new thematic curriculum plan has been created which, although in the early stages of delivery, is making good links between different subject areas and giving pupils the opportunity to write at length and practice their literacy skills across the curriculum. Pupils now have one book for topic work and there has been a decline in the use of printed worksheets. Teachers are enjoying the new curriculum which has many exciting opportunities for visits and visitors to enrich learning, for example a visit from lady fire-fighters during a topic on the 'Great Fire of London'. Pupils told

inspectors that they like this approach to learning and that lessons are more interesting.

A simplified mark scheme has been introduced which is used consistently across the school. Pupils know when they have achieved the learning objective for a lesson and marking often tells them what specifically they need to do to improve their work. The quality of feedback given to pupils is often good although it is still too variable in mathematics. The new 'I can' progress statements motivate pupils and tell them where they are in relation to National Curriculum levels, but opportunities are sometimes missed to refer to these targets in lessons and involve pupils more closely in deciding for themselves when they have achieved a target.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in May 2007:

- Improve teaching and learning to a consistently good standard by ensuring that teachers provide work that enables pupils to progress at a good rate – satisfactory

Leadership and management

The headteacher of the Federation has taken over the day-to-day running of the school full time. He has responded positively to the challenges the school faced due to the long term absence of some staff and the head of school by ensuring high quality supply staff are in place. Agreed procedures are in place to raise attainment and are being consistently applied throughout the school which has accelerated the schools' progress since the last visit. The appointment of an acting deputy headteacher has strengthened the leadership team and she is receiving good support to develop her role. The acting deputy headteacher and the literacy subject leader are attending the Leading from the Middle training from the National College of School Leadership and being mentored effectively by the deputy headteacher from the High School. The roles and responsibilities of the leadership team have been clearly defined and are known to all staff. A more robust programme of monitoring and evaluation has been implemented including focused lesson observations, weekly scrutiny of lesson planning and the work in pupils' books and gathering the opinions of pupils. This has given the senior leadership an accurate view of how successful initiatives have been and enabled them to bring into the school the help they need to secure further improvement. Effective support from consultants has enabled staff to carry out new initiatives with confidence and although the pace of change has been rigorous, the staff feel well supported because they have been involved and consulted at each stage.

The governing body committee responsible for monitoring the progress the school is making meets regularly. Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and ask challenging questions about the progress being made by the school. The governing body holds the school to account and is a visible presence within the school. For example, a visit by governors to see for themselves the progress the school is making was very successful and further plans have been made to talk to middle managers and staff about their work.

The federation of the two schools is now beginning to have an impact. Teachers from the high school have supported the teaching of science in Year 6 and the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) from the high school has taken over the role in the primary school in the absence of the head of school. The headteacher has refined the school improvement plan to concentrate on the areas for improvement necessary to accelerate the schools progress.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in May 2007:

- Develop the skills of the senior leadership team and governors so that responsibility for bringing about the necessary rapid and sustained improvement is shared effectively – satisfactory
- Take measures to ensure that the quality and continuity of pupils' education is not disrupted – good

External support

The LA acted positively to the previous monitoring visit and placed a senior representative within the school for two days a week. She has supported the headteacher in tackling unsatisfactory teaching and in ensuring that learning has not been unduly affected by the long term absence of some staff. She has also supported the acting middle managers in developing their role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and has provided good direction during the planning of the new curriculum. The headteacher and staff feel that the support from the LA has been challenging and has motivated them to carry out the necessary improvements with more rigour. The LA feels that the school can sustain improvements and has developed a strategy to scale down the current high level of support.

Priorities for further improvement

- Continue to embed the new systems introduced since the last visit, especially in developing marking feedback in mathematics.