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Mr David Rose
Headteacher of the Federation
Hessle Penshurst Primary School
Winthorpe Road
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Hessle
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Dear Mr Rose

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF HESSLE PENSHURST PRIMARY SCHOOL

Following my visit with David Earley Additional Inspector, to your school on 18 and 19 June 2008, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the third 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 – good
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 third monitoring inspection on 18 and 19 June 2008

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and pupils' books and observed all teachers. They met with the headteacher of the federation, acting deputy headteacher, the middle management team, a group of pupils and parents, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority (LA).

Context

Since the last visit three teachers continue to be on long-term sickness absence. They have been replaced by part-time teachers from the school opting to work full-time to minimise disruption to learning. The main disruption has been to one year group and the school has acknowledged this and made sure that staffing for this group of pupils is stable for next year.

Achievement and standards

Achievement across the school as seen in lessons and the school's good tracking data show that pupils' progress is accelerating. The school has refined its systems to ensure that any underachievement is identified quickly and tackled through a range of intervention packages and catch up programmes to accelerate pupils' progress. The school's own data show that these actions are successful. The school is very pro-active in identifying strategies that work well for one group of pupils and applying them to other groups within the school. These initiatives have had the biggest impact on progress in reading and writing across Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) where pupils are now working at an appropriate level for their age. Recently introduced personalised 'I can do' statements are used well in lessons and pupils are very enthusiastic about filling them in. Pupils told inspectors that they like knowing what they are working towards and what they need to do next. Teachers are also using these statements effectively in lessons as reminders to pupils and linking them well to learning objectives. However, while progress is accelerating the systems are still relatively new and there has not yet been enough time to see how this will impact on standards across the school until the next set of national data is produced.

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' personal development is very good. This is underpinning the more rapid progress pupils are making. Behaviour, relationships and pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They enthusiastically take part in lessons in partnership with their teachers. They work together in groups and cooperate with each other to extend

their learning well. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy school and especially the new curriculum because it gives them opportunities to learn in new and exciting ways, with many visits and visitors. They were enthusiastic about the changes that the school has made and talked in a mature way about the impact on their own learning. One of the biggest differences in the school is the many ways that the school involves pupils in their learning. This is now a school where pupils really do have a voice.

Quality of provision

The school has worked tirelessly to improve the quality of teaching across the school. Teachers are regularly monitored by senior staff who give them good feedback and encouragement to improve their practice. The will to improve is plain to see across the school. In lessons, teachers' planning is good and data from a range of sources are used to plan exciting lessons which meet the needs of pupils in each class. Careful planning ensures that there is support for lower attaining pupils and higher level work for more able pupils in English. However, work in books shows that there is sometimes insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in mathematics who have too few opportunities to use and apply their knowledge in problem solving situations. Despite this, teaching and learning across the school are good with some examples of outstanding practice. The best teaching is characterised by the way teachers are weaving together different parts of the curriculum, excellent relationships with pupils and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. In one outstanding lesson for older pupils, the teacher had skilfully woven together knowledge from the history topic on World War 2 to develop note-taking skills. This knowledge was then used by pupils to role play the main characters from the Munich Agreement accurately and confidently which stimulated good dialogue and peer assessment of performance. Similar practice was seen in a lesson for younger pupils who were using their knowledge of the Egyptians to write stories. The teacher's skilful questioning and constant reminders to pupils of what a good piece of work looked like enabled all pupils to produce good stories and make good progress.

Teachers have introduced weekly reflection time on a Friday where pupils of all ages reflect on what they have achieved during the week and what they still need to do to improve. This knowledge is used by teachers to plan work appropriately for individual pupils during the next week. This, coupled with teachers' own evaluations of teaching and learning on a daily basis, is ensuring that there is a good match between activities and pupils' abilities. Pupils' work is marked regularly and teachers also use this assessment information to plan lessons. Good encouragement and feedback is given to pupils through detailed comments in books.

The revision of the curriculum has been instrumental in helping the school make the good progress they have so far. It has enabled teachers to make exciting links between subject areas, practise writing skills across the curriculum and generally add enrichment to lessons which aids enjoyment and achievement. Teachers enjoy teaching in this way and pupils reap the rewards of their teachers' hard work. The thematic model that the school has devised is well planned and delivered. There is a good depth of different subject knowledge in all curriculum areas and this was evident in pupil's books.

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 – good

Leadership and management

The headteacher of the federation has taken over the day-to-day running of the school very effectively. He is ably supported by the acting deputy headteacher. Together, they have formed a team of middle managers who, although new to the role, have played their part in improving teaching and learning, planning and delivery of the curriculum. The headteacher has stabilised staffing and raised staff morale. Parents' confidence in the school has been restored. Parents interviewed were very pleased with their children's education and the improved communication they receive from the school. They said; 'our children come to school with a smile on their faces because they know what is expected of them and they know they are making good progress'. Parents were also complimentary about teachers' commitment and the improvements the school has made in informing them about the curriculum and what topics their children are covering.

School leaders have been very selective in the support they have brokered for planned improvements. They have used a blend of advanced skills teachers and specialist teachers from the High School to work alongside teachers and help deliver themed days. The staff have responded to this support very well and have taken on board advice with enthusiasm because there is a collective and continued desire to improve all areas of their work.

The senior leadership team has carried out a rigorous programme of monitoring to check that planned improvements are carried out. Middle managers have monitored planning on a weekly basis and given good feedback to colleagues. However, the middle managers are new to the role of monitoring and their roles are less well developed in the monitoring of teaching and learning across the school.

The governing body has supported the school well. The chair of governors has a strategic view of the federation and sees the two schools pulling closer together with mutual benefit. He is keen to continue to be a presence in the school and members of the monitoring and evaluation committee make regular visits to see for themselves how things are going. They ask searching questions about pupils' progress and challenge the information they are given by the school.

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 – good
- Take measures to ensure that the quality and continuity of pupils' education is not disrupted – good

External support

The support given by the LA has been good. The balance between offering advice and brokering the right support has paid off. The area relations manager has developed a good working relationship with the school. She stepped in to give intensive support when it was needed and has now gradually withdrawn in the knowledge that the school can sustain the necessary improvements themselves. She is always available if necessary to act as a sounding board or offer advice and continues to meet regularly with the senior team.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improve opportunities for more able pupils to use and apply their knowledge to problem solving in mathematics to further accelerate their progress.
- Further develop the skills of the middle management team in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.