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Wednesday 14 July 2010

Mrs Jacqueline Sinkins
Rackheath Primary School
Willoughby Way
Rackheath
Norwich
NR13 6SL

Dear Mrs Sinkins

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Tuesday 13 July 2010 and for the information which you provided during my visit. Please also convey my thanks to the staff and children.

Since the last inspection a new maths subject leader has been appointed. The headteacher is now able to devote more time to her leadership and management role. The local authority has appointed an additional experienced governor and has facilitated the school's collaborative partnership with a nearby National Support School. The school roll has remained stable.

As a result of the inspection on 24 November 2009, the school was asked to ensure that:

- school leaders and governors improve the quality of teaching and learning to raise pupils' achievement in English and mathematics
- ensure that self-evaluation processes improve the learning of pupils

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Outcomes for pupils have improved because their progress is monitored better and teaching has improved. As a result they are learning more effectively. Published data for 2009 indicate that the progress pupils make improved to just above national average, this being most marked in science. Boys made better progress than girls although they reached lower standards. Standards attained in both Key Stage 1 and 2 increased in 2009, the increase being largest at Key Stage 2 where standards were significantly above the national average. Differences in the attainment of boys and



girls are reducing. The school's own attainment monitoring data for 2010 indicate further improvements in both progress and standards. Attendance is good with an improving trend and no persistent absentees. Classroom observations confirmed that pupils make progress that is at least satisfactory.

The development of the collaborative partnership has effectively enabled the sharing of good practice. Staff visit their partner school regularly and peer observations of classes have done much to raise teaching standards. As a result, the proportion of classes that are good is higher than at the last inspection. The curriculum has improved because class planning has improved, particularly for literacy and numeracy. Assessment processes are now systematic and accurate. Teachers have a much clearer view of the progress that pupils are making. Most teachers use this information well to structure class activities and learning so that pupils of all abilities make progress. Target setting for individual pupils is being implemented across the school so that they know what they need to do to improve. Classroom observations confirmed teachers' evaluations of the standards reached by individual pupils. Marking of written work has improved. Teaching assistants work very effectively and are appreciated by pupils.

The school improvement process is successfully driving up standards. The monitoring of provision is now much more effective. The school's lesson observation system is applied systematically and it accurately evaluates the quality of teaching. However, the school recognises that the process is not sufficiently focussed on learning. The reviewing and planning of pupils' work is good. Lesson planning is well-developed so that all pupils are able to progress in mixed year groups.

The school's self evaluation is realistic about the challenges facing the school. Action plans are sufficiently rigorous and progress against their well-defined outcomes is effectively monitored. The governing body is now more active in monitoring and challenging of the school. Its members monitor the improvement plan closely and pay regular visits to classes to observe its implementation. Governors monitor their own performance well. They have ensured that adults looking after children in the after-school club now have appropriate qualifications.

The local authority's action plan, together with the school improvement plan, is fit for purpose and provides a secure basis to drive the school forward. Good support has been provided by the local authority.

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

Ian Seath
Her Majesty's Inspector

