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26 January 2012

Mrs H Broad
Headteacher
Intake Primary School
Sidney Road
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN2 6EW

Dear Mrs Broad

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Intake Primary School

Following my visit with Charles Lowry, Ofsted Seconded, to your school on 24 and 25 January 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2011. 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 and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

Newly Qualified Teachers may be appointed subject to the agreement of the lead inspector.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Doncaster.

Yours sincerely

Susan Bowles
Her Majesty's Inspector

January 2012



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2011

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate the rate of progress made by all groups of pupils by:
 - improving the quality and consistency of teaching so that all pupils learn equally well
 - ensuring accurate assessments of pupils' attainment and progress are used to match work to their different needs and to provide appropriate levels of support and challenge
 - ensuring the curriculum is planned so that it systematically develops pupils' basic skills through interesting and engaging tasks
 - ensuring all pupils receive detailed feedback on how well they are doing and how to achieve their targets.

- Improve attendance by:
 - working with parents and carers to emphasise the importance of ensuring that their children attend regularly
 - taking specific action in relation to those pupils who are persistently absent.

- Improve the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring leaders are fully knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements and what constitutes good practice
 - improving the quality of provision so that it is well matched to the needs of all children and engages their interest
 - ensuring that regular and accurate assessments of children's small steps in learning are used by staff to inform their interactions with individuals in order to promote faster progress in learning.

- Improve leadership, management and governance by:
 - ensuring that all leaders, both permanent and temporary, have the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to carry out their responsibilities effectively
 - ensuring that all leaders rigorously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their areas of responsibility and take the action necessary to bring about further improvement
 - ensuring that the governing body has an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness and carries out its responsibilities effectively.

- Improve safeguarding arrangements and ensure they fully meet requirements by:
 - taking immediate steps to rectify identified weaknesses
 - ensuring that all procedures are robust
 - ensuring monitoring of arrangements is regular.

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Intake Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 24 and 25 January 2012

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work and met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team and other members of staff, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. Documents including records of incidents relating to pupils' behaviour and action taken to promote good attendance were scrutinised.

Context

There is now a more stable and better established leadership team including a permanent deputy headteacher. However, some classes have experienced changes of teacher. Two out of 11 classes are currently taught by temporary staff and at the time of the visit one was taught by an experienced teacher seconded from a partner school.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Pupils' attainment remains below average, but there are signs that they are making better progress. Both boys and girls are more frequently showing interest in their lessons and are more actively involved in learning, because of improvements in the way they are taught. Learning is improving at a satisfactory rate because teaching is steadily strengthening. This is reflected in the school's increasingly accurate assessments. Pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills were carefully assessed at two points in the autumn term. Most had moved forward in the interval, including those with relatively low or high prior attainment. However, progress is less secure in a few classes. Boys' progress is improving, thanks to lessons which are more active, relevant and well paced, but as a group their attainment has not yet closed the gap on the girls'. Progress in writing has improved less securely than in reading or mathematics. Pupils' books too often show limited or patchy improvement in writing over time, especially where teaching quality has not been consistent.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- raise pupils' attainment and accelerate the rate of progress made by all groups of pupils – satisfactory

The quality of teaching

Teaching has improved at a satisfactory rate. Improvements in the provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage have continued. The youngest children's use of language to communicate has improved as a result of a richer range of experiences and challenges better matched to their different needs, but there is still some inconsistency in the way adults encourage children to talk. The teaching of basic reading and writing skills is

strengthening, but teaching assistants need better training about their role in teaching these skills.

Teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 also shows improvement as a result of higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers are working hard to embed the essentials for good learning in every classroom. In the best examples observed, when teaching captivated pupils' interest, focussed on their well understood needs and provided good opportunities for them to work independently, learning showed clear improvement. This quality is not yet seen consistently, but there are good models to be shared. In general, teachers have a better understanding of what their pupils can already do and what they need to learn to make the expected progress, but some do not use this information well enough to ensure highly effective learning. For example, they usually check pupils' understanding, but miss some opportunities to deepen it or to add extra challenge. Marking has improved: it is more regularly done and feedback is more informative, but the effect is still variable. In cases where teachers routinely set clear targets and check pupils' response, the quality of work shows stronger improvement over time. Teachers are talking less and using appropriate strategies to engage pupils' interest, but do not always succeed in involving pupils in purposeful talk or thinking for themselves because tasks are not well structured or clearly explained. They are providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills in the context of themes which they find interesting and relevant. The improvements in the curriculum and teaching are beginning to show a positive effect on all pupils' progress and independence, but need to be consistently embedded in every class.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage – satisfactory

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Positive recognition of good attendance and punctuality, combined with a persistent, consistent and timely response to absences and lateness, has had a good effect. Compared with the same time last year, attendance has improved by more than two percentage points. School now starts earlier, and almost all pupils are ready to start learning on time.

When motivated by good teaching, pupils are really enthusiastic about learning and take pride in their work. When teachers structure activities appropriately, they do their best to take on responsibility, for example, to express their own views or come up with good ideas as a group. However, they need more well structured practice in the skills of independent learning. For the most part pupils cooperate well with adults and behave sensibly. The school campaigns against bullying and pupils confirm that they generally feel safe and supported. Reported incidents are followed up and parents or carers are involved as appropriate. However, pupils spoken to say they feel less well protected outside lesson times.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve attendance – good

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The headteacher has ensured that each of the priorities for further improvement have been tackled speedily and with positive impact. Members of senior leadership team have now taken up their roles in monitoring and evaluating. They have played their part in ensuring that teachers' assessments are better-moderated and more securely evidenced, giving the school a more secure baseline from which it can track pupils' progress. The deputy headteacher has a clear overview of the progress now being made by different groups of pupils in different areas of learning. Leaders are using this more accurate information to evaluate the impact of their planning to improve the quality of education with unflinching honesty, and to focus their plans for further improvement. Teachers are better held to account through regular meetings to review their pupils' progress and plan interventions to boost it where needed. Most teachers who have been through this process now have a clearer picture of what each pupil can do and needs to learn next.

The essential features of good teaching and learning are more widely seen in classrooms. The whole staff has been involved in defining these qualities and regular monitoring and professional development by all the senior team are helping to embed them. Teachers have been given helpful written feedback and are keen to meet higher expectations for their work. If, despite extra support, teaching has not met expectations, firm action has been taken. Staff who have joined the school recently have been inducted and monitored. Those who are new to leadership have observed lessons and scrutinised work alongside their more experienced colleagues. All these steps are strengthening the school's capacity to improve itself. However, to ensure that teaching quality improves as rapidly as possible, all staff need more effective opportunities to learn from best practice. Individual targets for improvement need to be more consistently developmental and to be rigorously monitored.

The school now has a streamlined improvement plan which succinctly summarises what has been achieved and the next priorities. It has a firm focus on higher standards of attainment and realistic milestones. Senior staff have worked with teams to produce practical action plans to realise the targets for literacy and numeracy. The governing body is now working in committees which are increasingly active in monitoring improvements in key areas in a supportive but suitably challenging way. For example, a recent report from one committee reviews the impact of recent steps to improve the school's engagement with parents or carers and the local community. Safeguarding arrangements have sustained the improvements seen at the previous visit. However, some statutory duties, such as reviewing the effectiveness of policies and procedures to keep pupils safe and to promote equality, have yet to be completed.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on areas for improvement:

- improve leadership, management and governance – satisfactory

- improve safeguarding arrangements and ensure they fully meet requirements – satisfactory.

External support

Support from external partners is satisfactory and has helped the school improve. The help of the local leader for education in supporting the headteacher and the Early Years Foundation Stage has had positive impact and is now being reduced. The local authority has helped to secure some experienced staff to support improvement. Visits and discussions with local authority partners have helped the school review its progress and overcome some obstacles. However, direct monitoring of the quality of teaching has been limited. The school continues to need support from its partners to develop high quality teaching.