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Mrs Adams
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Adams

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF FLAMBOROUGH CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Introduction

Following my visit with Roger Hartley HMI to your school on 5 and 6 December 2005, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the fifth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in January 2004.

This letter 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.

Evidence

During the visit 13 parts of lessons, two registration sessions and one assembly were inspected. Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of staff, the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority. Informal discussions were held with members of staff and with pupils and samples of work were examined. A range of documents was scrutinised.

Context

Since the last monitoring inspection in May 2005, the school has appointed a new permanent headteacher who started in September 2005. The school has also redefined some of the responsibilities of the permanent staff to contribute to the leadership team.

Achievement and standards

Standards in national tests in 2005 showed improvement at the end of Key Stage 1. Results were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics; this represents improvement since the school's inspection in January 2004. Results in the 2005 national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, however, showed a decline in English, mathematics and science; these remain well below the national average. The school's and the local authority's analysis of performance indicates that many of the pupils underachieved and they failed to meet their targets in English and mathematics. These results reflect a legacy of underachievement but standards in Key Stage 2 remain too low.

Progress in lessons is satisfactory overall. It was good in five lessons, satisfactory in seven lessons and unsatisfactory in one lesson. Most pupils had a clear understanding of what they were expected to learn. However, in some lessons, tasks planned by teachers did not consistently meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, pupils who are more able and those who have learning difficulties and /or disabilities do not always achieve as well as they should.

Judgement

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2004:

- raise the pupils' achievement and, through this, standards – satisfactory progress

Personal development and well-being

The majority of pupils have good attitudes to work and enjoy their time in school. They are generally attentive, keen to do well and offer their ideas and opinions. They respond best of all when lessons contain opportunities for them to take part in practical tasks, solve problems, and work independently or in small groups. However, there are occasions when older pupils in particular, lack confidence in their ability to plan an investigation or when tackling new or complex tasks. Pupils' self esteem is high; this is because adults celebrate what pupils can do rather than dwelling on what they cannot do. Behaviour is good overall, both in classes and at break times. Occasionally pupils become restless or inattentive when their work is too difficult or easy, or when they are sitting for long periods of time. Attendance, at 96%, is above the national average.

The pupils say that they are happy in school and feel that behaviour is getting better. They are pleased to be represented on the school council and are proud of their effective and practical contributions to improve the school; for example, selecting colour schemes for communal toilets. Pupils are clear about the safe practices that have been established and older pupils respond well to encouragement to look after younger pupils at break times. Although there is more to do to promote healthy life styles, the school is planning to embark on the healthy schools programme, has forged links with a local sports partnership, and set up first aid training for pupils. All these initiatives are working well.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching was good in five lessons, satisfactory in seven; and unsatisfactory in one. There are some growing strengths in the teaching. Much of the teaching is enthusiastic and confident and work is presented in ways that hold the pupils' interest and helps their concentration. Lessons are increasingly well planned; objectives are clear and almost always shared with the pupils. In a growing number of lessons work is better matched to the pupils' needs. The use of assessment data to find out what pupils can or cannot do is gathering pace and teachers are becoming increasingly confident in using it to plan work. There is still some way to go, however, to make sure that pupils of all abilities are given tasks that always challenge them effectively so they make brisk progress in their learning and across all subjects.

Support staff are used well and give valuable support to teachers and pupils alike. They are well prepared and take on a full range of responsibilities without which, the complex teaching arrangements to meet the needs of pupils in mixed age classes, would have limited impact.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and there are no major gaps in what is taught. There is a well thought out plan to develop subjects in turn; for example, science and information and communication technology (ICT). The headteacher is the designated special needs coordinator although her extensive portfolio of other responsibilities places a practical constraint on what she can do, despite her determination to put the provision on an effective and efficient footing. There is some support from the local authority which is wisely used and pupils' individual education plans, written by class teachers, are carefully moderated. However, there is very limited scope to check how pupils benefit from the provision, day by day.

The school is committed to providing an inclusive curriculum and has taken the important step of reducing the number of occasions when pupils are withdrawn from classes for additional teaching in some aspects of their work. The staff are caring and welcoming, and despite uncertainties in staff stability, adults work hard to provide a stable environment in which the pupils can feel supported.

Judgement

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2004:

- improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment – satisfactory progress
- provide a curriculum which is inclusive and effective – satisfactory progress

Leadership and management

The new headteacher provides good leadership and management. In a short time she has built well on previous gains by working purposefully with staff, pupils and the wider school community. She has high expectations for everyone to try their best and provides a good role model for others. The headteacher has a clear and

accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and development planning reflects the school's priorities. A good range of support and training has been provided for staff to meet identified needs and more is planned to improve the use of assessment in lessons and to improve the tracking of pupils' progress so that targets set are achieved. The coordinators are beginning to develop their roles and they have a better understanding of their responsibilities. However, instability in staffing continues to impede the progress made in evaluating the quality of provision in order that standards and achievement improve. Because of this, a heavy burden rests upon the headteacher in terms of responsibilities of subjects and aspects of the school's work.

Governors have benefited significantly from training, guidance and support received from the local authority. As a result, they are better equipped to understand the school's focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning so that achievement is better and standards are raised. However, governors recognise they are in the early stage of development in terms of evaluating the quality of provision and their own effectiveness. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities to ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced. The curriculum has improved and cross curricular links have correctly been identified for further development.

Judgement

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2004:

- improve the quality and focus of leadership and management – good progress
- ensure that the governors hold the school to account – satisfactory progress
- to meet statutory requirements, ensure that the school offers all aspects of the National Curriculum - satisfactory progress.

External support

The local authority has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It has responded positively to the school's needs. Staff and governors have valued the training, guidance and support provided. The local authority has a clear view of where future support is required and, plans to ensure the school's needs are met, are well placed.

Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures– satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

Priorities for further improvement:

- continue to raise standards through accurate use of assessment data in planning work

- review the allocation of responsibilities so that staff contribute effectively to the overall leadership and management of the school
- identify and develop opportunities for cross curricular links
- improve provision for the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Director of Lifelong Learning for the East Riding of Yorkshire and the Diocesan Director of Education for York.

Yours sincerely

Elisabeth Linley
H M Inspector