



12 July 2006

Ms Virginia Bridge
Rye Oak School
Whorlton Road
London
SE15 3PD

Dear Ms Bridge

FRESH START: MONITORING INSPECTION OF RYE OAK SCHOOL

Introduction

Following my visit to your school on 6 July 2006, 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 opened in April 2005.

This letter will be published 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

I observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, the phase leader for Years 5 and 6, a representative from the local authority (LA). I also held informal discussions with groups of pupils and a telephone conversation with the chair of governors.

Context

Two teachers have left the school since the last monitoring visit in March 2006. Four agency staff are planned to leave the school at the end of this term and following a successful recruitment campaign the school expects to be fully staffed next term. A Children's Centre manager has been appointed to further strengthen the senior leadership team. Year 6 pupils were visiting the Docklands Museum and Year 1 pupils were visiting the Natural History Museum when this inspection was carried out.

Achievement and standards

Children in the Nursery are happy, confident and independent. They make good progress in all areas of learning.

Evidence from the school's assessment information and inspector's scrutiny of the pupils' work demonstrates that standards are rising. Overall standards in writing remain below the national expectation for the pupils' ages but many pupils in Years 1 to 5 have made good progress in relation to their starting points and Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory progress. However, there continues to be some variation in progress across classes and year groups. Standards in mathematics remain below the national average but most pupils make at least satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Pupils are generally polite and welcoming. Most have positive attitudes to school and have developed good relationships with their teachers, support staff and other pupils. Behaviour is good and teachers manage the challenging behaviour of a small minority of pupils effectively so that it does not have a negative impact on their learning or the learning of other pupils in their class. Pupils know what is expected of them and most arrive at their lessons ready to learn although a few still need frequent intervention from adults to keep them engaged. Attendance has improved and the number of exclusions has reduced significantly. Pupils are increasingly being encouraged to develop independence and many only ask for help when they really need it. Most pupils know their targets and are increasingly being given opportunities to assess their own progress in relation to the learning objectives for the lesson.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching has improved and all lessons seen were at least satisfactory with some good features and around half were good or outstanding. Teachers are now planning lessons to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, although there is still too little challenge for the most able pupils in some classes. In the best lessons the learning objectives are clear; the lessons are taught at a brisk pace and there is a range of activities which motivate the pupils and engage them in their learning. Good use is made of visits to places of interest. For example, Year 5 pupils were using a recent visit to the Tate Modern as a focus for a writing activity which encouraged them to think about the feelings that a particular piece of artwork evoked. Marking of the pupils' writing is mostly good and focuses on what the

pupils have achieved and how they can improve or develop their work. However, this is not consistent across all classes and subjects.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the monitoring inspection in November 2005:

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching – satisfactory progress.
- Increase the level of challenge for the most able pupils - inadequate progress.
- Involve pupils more actively in assessing their own learning – satisfactory progress.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. The school uses monitoring and assessment information well to inform self-assessment and as a result the senior leadership team has a clear and accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders are moving away from their earlier modelling role and are now more focussed on developing teaching capacity through coaching and support. This is encouraging teachers to be more confident and develop their own teaching style. Professional development has been clearly focussed on developing capacity in line with priorities in the school's raising achievement plan. For example, Foundation Stage staff have received training from the Speech and Language Service which has enabled them to plan effective provision for children with language and communication difficulties. Some Key Stage 2 staff have had training from the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service to support them in managing and supporting children who have challenging patterns of behaviour. This has resulted in a considerable improvement in the behaviour of those children who are being supported.

Governors are well informed and are holding the school to account for the standards it achieves.

External support

The local authority has reviewed the effectiveness of its support for the school and has revised its support plan and as a result support is well matched to the school's priorities for development. Consultants from the LA are focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning, raising standards and developing the curriculum. The school has valued the support and training provided by the consultants, particularly in science.

Main Judgements

The school's overall progress is satisfactory.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Chief Education Officer for Southwark.

Yours sincerely

Robert Ellis
H M Inspector