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Ms Virginia Bridge
Rye Oak School
Whorlton Road
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Dear Ms Bridge

FRESH START: MONITORING INSPECTION OF RYE OAK SCHOOL

Introduction

Following my visit with Maria Dawes HMI to your school on 14 November 2006, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the fourth 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

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, met with the headteacher, conducted a telephone discussion with the chair of governors and spoke informally with staff and pupils.

Context

The school has a full complement of teaching staff. Six new permanent teachers joined the school in September, five of whom are newly qualified. A children's centre and extended services manager has strengthened the senior leadership team. One teacher is on maternity leave and her teaching is being covered by one of the phase leaders.

Achievement and standards

Standards continue to rise but remain below average overall. Pupils enter the nursery with standards that are below average, particularly in language and communication, but the new children have settled quickly and most are making outstanding progress. Pupils in Reception have established routines and as a result of activities and support which is well matched to their needs, make good progress. Attainment in Key Stage 1 is below average but standards are improving. In 2006 the standards achieved in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were broadly average in English and below average in mathematics and science. However, this represents at least satisfactory and in many cases good achievement in relation to standards those pupils achieved at the end of Key Stage 1. Progress in developing reading continues to be a strength.

Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported and make similar progress to other pupils.

The school has made good progress

Personal development and well-being.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Infrequent incidents involving inappropriate behaviour are dealt with calmly and effectively. The behaviour policy has been revised in the light of feedback from the staff and it is being consistently implemented. A small number of boys have been regularly engaging in aggressive behaviour and the school has introduced a policy of 'zero tolerance' to fighting. Although this has initially led to a number of fixed term exclusions the impact on the majority of pupils has been very positive. The school continues to work intensively and individually with the few who are persisting in aggressive behaviour. Pupils show interest and commitment to their work and are willing to help their teachers. For example, in the nursery pupils happily take responsibility for clearing up between activities. Pupils' positive attitudes are due to the effective use of a range of teaching and learning strategies which engage and motivate pupils and work which is pitched at an appropriated level. They enjoy working in pairs and groups and co-operate well to support each other and are developing their capacity to be independent in their learning. They are clear about what they have to do to improve and some lessons have opportunities for pupils to assess their progress. This however is not consistent across all classes.

The school has very good systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality and has established a strategy of targeting pupils who have poor attendance. As a result of actions taken attendance continues to improve. Support for specific groups of pupils is good. Pupils in need of additional support are identified early and intervention and support groups are based on providing appropriate support for pupils.

The school has made good progress

Quality of provision

All teaching seen was at least satisfactory and around half was good or outstanding. In most lessons teachers used incisive questioning to help pupils develop their thinking skills. Teachers used a good variety of activities and often used paired or group work to develop speaking and listening. Learning objectives were clear and in the best lessons these were frequently re-visited during the lesson and pupils were encouraged to judge their progress in relation to the learning objective. Teaching assistants worked well with the class teachers and made an effective contribution to the pupils' learning.

The school has made good progress

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by previous monitoring inspections:

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching - satisfactory progress
- Increase the level of challenge for the most able pupils - satisfactory progress
- Involve pupils more actively in assessing their own learning - satisfactory progress
- Provide better opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners- satisfactory progress
- Ensure that assessment information is used consistently to inform pupils about how well they are doing and what they need to do to achieve their targets - good progress

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and strategic planning reflects and promotes the school's ambitions and goals. Senior leaders undertake rigorous evaluation of the school's performance and use the findings effectively to

promote improvement. A commitment to staff development is reflected in effective induction and professional development opportunities.

The recruitment, retention, deployment of staff are very well managed, and support staff are well deployed to make learning more effective. Assessment data is used well to monitor performance and results in appropriate intervention to address areas of weakness.

A recent parents' questionnaire shows that parents are very positive about the education and care that the school provides.

The school has made good progress

External support

The school has continued to develop links with external agencies is working with the Peckham Academy to offer pupils opportunities to engage in drama and music enrichment and is participating in a sports partnership programme with Harris Girls' Academy. For example newly qualified teachers are being trained and supported in teaching gymnastics. The local authority has continued to provide support for the school through the work of the school achievement adviser and subject and early years consultants.

The school has made satisfactory progress

Main Judgements

The school's overall progress is good.

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