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20 November 2008

Mr Robert Singh
The Headteacher
Risley Avenue Primary School
The Roundway
Tottenham
London
N17 7AB

Dear Mr Singh

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 12 November 2008, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you and your senior leaders provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my particular thanks to the staff I met formally or talked with, to your Chair of Governors, the representatives from the local authority and the group of pupils who met with me to share their perspective of the school.

Since the last inspection one of the two deputy headteachers has left the school. Pending a proposed restructuring of the leadership team, the Inclusion Manager is acting assistant headteacher. The school now has an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) leader instead of separate year leaders for Nursery and Reception.

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.

As a result of the inspection on 1 October 2007, the school was asked to:

- raise children's achievement in all areas of their learning in the Foundation Stage
- ensure that pupils develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively as they move through the school and use these to support their work in other subjects
- ensure that teachers use a wide enough range of teaching strategies to enthuse and motivate pupils in lessons and involve them more in their own learning.

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

Broadly speaking, children join the school with skills below those expected for their age. Standards at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) have risen since the last inspection, although they are still below average, particularly in personal and social development, reading and writing, and some aspects of mathematics.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are improving. In 2008, for the first time, standards were broadly average, with the proportion reaching Level 2 or above close to that seen nationally. Between 2005 and 2007 standards improved at the end of Key Stage 2. Having previously been exceptionally low, in 2007, standards were below average for the first time. The 2008 data show that standards have fallen and are exceptionally low again, although these figures are provisional and writing results are subject to appeal. Nevertheless, pupils made satisfactory progress from low starting points.

Overall, pupils' achievement remains satisfactory, although the school's own data show pockets of improvement. This is the result of better teaching and learning, rigorous tracking and regular pupil progress meetings, as well as intervention programmes carefully tailored to pupils' needs. The school's data analysis has rightly identified the need to ensure high quality classroom teaching that meets the needs of pupils at school action as well as those capable of reaching the higher levels.

The EYFS has improved significantly in the last year. Support and training from within school and the local authority, including participation in a communication, language and literacy project from the beginning of this term, and visits to other schools are improving staff's awareness of good EYFS practice. Teaching is better, with greater consistency of approach between classes and across the Nursery and Reception. There is a mix of adult-led activities, including daily focused teaching of early literacy and mathematical skills, and opportunities for children to make their own choices, as well as improved use of the outdoor area as part of the learning environment. Parents are more closely involved in their children's learning.

Regular and ongoing observations and assessments mean that staff have a better knowledge of each child's interests and abilities and can use this information to plan the next steps in learning. Clear expectations of the standards children should reach by the end of Nursery and Reception have been set and senior leaders have extended termly progress meetings to include children in EYFS, so that any underachievement, whether at higher or lower levels, is identified and addressed sooner rather than later. The impact of the work to date can be seen not only in terms of improved standards at age five, but, just as importantly, in that the school has a more accurate picture of children's attainment.

Before the school could make any headway in developing pupils' ICT skills, substantial investment in hardware and software was needed. This has taken considerable time and spending has had to be spread over two financial years. The new suite was completed at Easter 2008 and the first laptop trolley arrived during the summer term. The school is still waiting to take delivery of a second trolley. Equally necessary has been the investment in time to train staff to develop their

confidence in their own ICT capability and the teaching of ICT skills. A rolling programme of work has recently started to build on this and support them in using ICT across the curriculum. Alongside this, the ICT subject leader has developed a new scheme of work setting out the progression of skills and raising expectations of the standards pupils are expected to reach.

The arrival of the new equipment marked a turning point in pupils' access to ICT, something they recognise and appreciate. The subject leader is informally monitoring provision and sampling standards and progress. However, as yet there are no formal assessments or tracking and hence no evidence of impact on pupils' skills.

In the last year the school has continued to build on the improvements in teaching and learning that began when it was in a category of concern. A programme of whole staff development and individual support and challenge has eradicated any inadequate teaching and given staff a better understanding of what constitutes good teaching and learning. There are fewer occasions where pupils are expected to listen for long periods, more use of interactive and collaborative approaches, and better use of learning objectives and success criteria to involve them in their own learning. However, senior leaders rightly make the link between the quality of teaching and its impact on learning. They realise that, whilst lessons may look good, the strategies being used are not yet matched closely enough to the range of learners' needs, particularly those at school action and those with the potential to reach higher levels.

There is a solid foundation for further improvement. The headteacher and senior leaders have set out a clear direction for improving the school's performance and there are rigorous systems in place to monitor and track progress. There is increasing strength in middle management and governors have a clearer understanding of their responsibility to hold the school to account for standards and achievement. Support from the local authority has been good; officers recognise the progress made over recent years and are now focusing on building capacity within the school to drive improvement.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "A. Storey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "A".

Alison Storey
Her Majesty's Inspector