

PROTECT-INSPECTION



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Mrs Linda Meredith
Headteacher
Radburn Primary School
Radburn Way
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Dear Mrs Meredith

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Radburn Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 2 November 2011 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the Chair of the Governing Body and the local authority representative, both of whom met with me.

There have been a number staff changes since the last inspection. Three teachers have left the school and three new teachers have taken up post.

As a result of the inspection on 7 March 2011, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter. 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.

Attainment for last year's Year 6 was low and represented a further drop from the previous year. Currently, attainment remains low but there are clear signs that it is improving throughout the school and, most strongly, in Years 5 and 6. The school made slow progress in improving attainment last academic year. However, there is clear evidence that improvements to teaching are leading to pupils making accelerated progress this academic year.

Leaders are developing an increasingly clear view of strengths and remaining areas of weakness. Their monitoring is much more accurate and their evaluations are based on a wider range of evidence. Recently, leaders have taken steps to improve the reliability of tracking data and this is becoming more useful in enabling them to take precise actions to improve pupils' progress. Senior leaders have an accurate

view of the quality of teaching and are suitably focused in continuing to provide bespoke professional development so improvements continue. Teachers talk enthusiastically about the improvements made. Most have a clear understanding about the next steps in their own professional development and the impact their teaching has on pupils' achievement.

Teaching is now generally satisfactory and improving. However, more still needs to improve to ensure all pupils throughout the school make progress that will eradicate the significant underachievement that still exists, particularly in lower Key Stage 2. The impact of teaching is strongest in Years 5 and 6. This is important because it is in these year groups where the most significant and entrenched underachievement exists. Because pupils are better engaged in their learning, behaviour has improved. Staff and pupils say that behaviour has improved significantly in most classes and this contributes well to the better atmosphere for learning.

Teachers have increasingly high expectations. Almost all teachers talk enthusiastically about the fact that pupils are rising to the greater challenge set them. In most lessons, learning takes place at a brisker pace and pupils answer questions enthusiastically. In older classes, pupils take increasing control over their own learning. In these lessons, pupils are beginning to ask well-thought-out questions that help them develop their understanding. It is clear in these lessons that pupils know what they are learning about and, as a result, they take increasing responsibility for challenging themselves and working hard. Where teaching is less effective, teachers work hard to make lessons increasingly interesting and pupils generally enjoy their learning. However, not all pupils achieve as well as they could because work and questions are less effectively matched to their individual needs.

Attendance is improving throughout the school. The school has developed a range of strategies to encourage better attendance, including breakfast clubs and a weekly prize draw for good attendance. Pupils understand the importance of being at school and say that the rewards available encourage them to arrive regularly and punctually. The school, in partnership with the local authority, has become increasingly effective at working with parents and carers when attendance remains a concern. As a result, persistent absenteeism and punctuality have improved.

The local authority provides effective and focused support. They have produced a statement of action that, after some minor adjustments, is fit for purpose and helpful in illustrating expected milestones in the school's journey. A range of consultants, advisers and lead teachers are working in very specific ways within the school and alongside staff. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and leadership capacity is developing.

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I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Michael Sheridan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress by ensuring that in all lessons:
 - expectations of learning and behaviour are consistently high
 - assessment is used effectively to plan teaching and match tasks to pupils' needs so that they are challenged
 - ensure that the lesson and pupils' learning maintain a brisk pace.

- Raise the overall attendance rate to at least average by:
 - working closely with families whose children have low attendance
 - monitoring the effectiveness of the actions taken.

- Strengthen the monitoring and development of teaching by key leaders by:
 - identifying the main weaknesses in teaching
 - providing high quality coaching, support and training to improve the weaknesses in teachers' practice
 - checking that weaknesses are being eliminated.