

Tribal Education
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524 **Direct T** 0845 123 6001
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 0845 123 6002
www.ofsted.gov.uk **Direct email:** sarah.cartlidge@tribalgroup.com

10 December 2010

Mrs N Yudin
The Acting Headteacher
Lyon Park Junior School
Vincent Road
Wembley
Middlesex
HA0 4HH

Dear Mrs Yudin

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Lyon Park Junior School

Following my visit with Clare Gillies, additional inspector, to your school on 1 and 2 December 2010, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2009. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection are set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – **satisfactory**

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – **satisfactory**

Newly Qualified Teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Brent.

Yours sincerely

Chris Wood

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2009.

- Ensure safeguarding procedures comply with statutory requirements.
- Raise pupils' attainment and improve their learning and progress in reading, writing and science by:
 - improving the proportion of good or better teaching to at least 80% by the end of the summer term 2010
 - ensuring that all teaching is informed by pupil assessment so that work is closely matched to pupils' needs, especially for those pupils who are in the early stages of learning English
 - making sure that the marking of pupils' work is consistent and provides all pupils with clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work
 - rigorously evaluating the progress made by pupils in order to take swift and focused action for improvement.
- Develop the role of the governing body in holding the school to account for the rate of pupils' progress and for ensuring that satisfactory safeguarding procedures are in place and regularly reviewed.

Special measures: monitoring of Lyon Park Junior School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 1 and 2 December 2010

Evidence

Inspectors observed 11 lessons as well as parts of some lessons taught by a total of 17 teachers. Six lesson observations were undertaken jointly with the acting headteacher and the two deputy headteachers. Meetings were held with the senior leadership team and the subject leaders for English, mathematics and science. In addition, inspectors also interviewed the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, the School Improvement Partner and a group of eight parents and carers. Inspectors talked to children in lessons and met with 25 pupils from Years 3 to 6.

Context

The governing body has consulted on entering into a hard federation with the infant school that is located in the same building. A unanimous decision to proceed was taken in November 2010 and the hard federation will begin formally from January 2011. At this point, the acting headteacher will become the substantive executive headteacher for both the junior and infant schools. The process of restructuring the governing body has already begun. A seconded deputy headteacher joined the school's leadership team in January 2010. His contract has been extended until April 2011.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

Unvalidated results from the 2010 National Curriculum tests indicate that attainment in English improved when compared to the previous year and is now much closer to the national average. Attainment in mathematics remained broadly similar to the national average. Although below average, the proportion of pupils who attained a Level 4 in both English and mathematics rose by 10%. Taken together, pupils in this year group made good progress. The progress made by pupils with English as an additional language was also good. Nevertheless, the school recognises that currently relatively few pupils achieve the higher levels, especially in English. Accurate tracking also indicates that levels of attainment in writing are weaker in most year groups. Wisely, the school continues to prioritise this area while maintaining its focus on reading and mathematics.

In science, the pace of change has, until now, been slow. A new subject leader took up post in September. New systems have been introduced to track pupils' progress and attainment that are in line with those used for English and mathematics. Some work has begun to improve planning and develop teachers' subject knowledge. There are also innovative proposals to work closely with a local secondary school.

Nevertheless, these initiatives are new and have yet to have an impact on pupil outcomes.

Most pupils, including those who are in the early stages of learning English, are now making quicker progress in their learning. In spite of staff changes during the autumn term, the improvements seen at the time of the last visit have been maintained. The school's own monitoring and evidence from the inspection visit confirm that the proportion of good lessons has increased and that satisfactory lessons are demonstrating more good features. The incidence of inadequate teaching is now rare. In lessons, higher expectations and positive relationships between teachers and pupils are leading to a brisker pace to learning. Pupils say they enjoy learning because the lessons are fun. They also say that teachers' explanations are clearer, the work is more challenging and that, as a result, they are becoming more confident as learners. The use of talking partners, 'trios' and focused whole-class discussion is creating a richer language environment. However, on a few occasions, too much time is spent in discussion. There is now a need for a more strategic use of talk as part of the well-planned activities.

In literacy, success criteria are sharper and pupils are frequently shown good examples of effective writing. This is helping them to gain a better understanding of the styles and conventions of a range of genre. Thus, when writing a fantasy story, pupils in Year 6 were able to come up with imaginative and apposite ideas such as 'a magical pendant that can hypnotise the dragonlets'. Pupils could also explain that when writing in the first person they needed to focus on a character's 'thoughts and feelings'. However, in some lessons, the success criteria are not reinforced adequately. Furthermore, pupils do not regularly see contrasting examples of writing that demonstrate progression towards the higher levels. Consequently, pupils do not yet have a secure understanding of what makes excellent writing.

The quality of written feedback is improving. Teachers more consistently provide pupils with clear guidance on the steps they need to take to improve their work. However, currently, they do not have sufficiently meaningful opportunities to act on the sensible advice they are given, particularly when redrafting written work. Recent changes to the timings of the school day in Years 3 to 5 have begun to have a positive impact on ensuring that the most efficient use is made of lesson time, particularly during the afternoon sessions.

Teachers are committed to helping the school to improve. They plan together more collaboratively and this is leading to greater consistency in lessons and a stronger focus on learning. Middle leaders have increased confidence when using data about pupils' progress to identify where interventions are needed. They are taking a more active role in a range of leadership activities, including lesson observations, and monitoring the quality of planning and marking. Supported by senior leaders, they are now contributing well to pupils' progress meetings. This is enabling the teachers they manage to make better use of the data that are available to plan more

challenging lessons. However, while lessons are better matched to the needs of most pupils, there are missed opportunities to ensure that the most-able pupils are given work that enables them to achieve the more ambitious targets that are in place.

Judgement

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Raise pupils' attainment and improve their learning and progress in reading, writing and science – **satisfactory**

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Safeguarding procedures comply with statutory requirements. School leaders and the governing body are committed to ensuring that these effective systems are enhanced further. A revised safeguarding policy has now been adopted. Governors and staff received up-to-date safeguarding training during the autumn term. Plans are also in place for future training opportunities, such as e-safety workshops for staff and parents and carers. Currently, all aspects of safety and well-being are being monitored by the governing body safeguarding committee that works jointly with the infant school. Wisely, the Chair of the Governing Body recognises the importance of identifying a governor from the future governing body who can take on responsibility for overseeing this important area of the school's work.

The governing body is now more knowledgeable and better placed to challenge school leaders. Recent training on self-review has helped governors to gain a sharper view of their own strengths and areas for development. The governor who holds responsibility for monitoring attainment and progress is very well informed and is able to contribute fully to discussions about pupil achievement. A range of governors have also supported the recent recruitment of both teaching and non-teaching staff while parent governors took a central role in gathering feedback during the consultation on hard federation. The process of forming the new governing body has begun in earnest. Astutely, the school recognises that a smooth transition and prompt identification of key roles is needed to ensure that the overall pace of improvement across the school continues to accelerate.

Parents and carers are knowledgeable about the changes that are taking place at the school. They note that there have been positive improvements since the last inspection. In particular, they state that improved leadership by the acting headteacher and her team has ensured greater consistency for their children. Parents and carers also noted that children are receiving more challenging work in lessons and that lessons are better suited to their needs and interests. Nevertheless, parents and carers are rightly keen to see that the improvements that have been made in English are now replicated in science. Wisely, the school accepts that

parents and carers now need to be given clearer information about their children's progress and levels of attainment.

Judgement

Progress since the last monitoring visit on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure safeguarding procedures comply with statutory requirements – **satisfactory**
- Develop the role of the governing body in holding the school to account for the rate of pupils' progress and for ensuring satisfactory safeguarding procedures – **satisfactory**

External support

The school and the local authority work in close collaboration. Local authority support has been refined over time and now focuses closely on those areas that have been identified through the school's own and joint monitoring. Support from local authority advisers and consultants has been well received. The impact of work on using success criteria, developing guided reading and making more effective use of mental and oral starters in mathematics is improving the quality of teaching and learning. Recent support for the science subject leader is also beginning to have a positive effect, although it is too early to see an impact on raising attainment. The new School Improvement Partner is experienced, knows the school well and offers timely challenge. The training she has led on self-evaluation has had a positive impact on increasing the capacity of the governing body to hold school leaders to account. She has also supported the school strongly during the process of moving towards a hard federation.