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28 January 2011

Miss H Bent
Jeffries Primary and Nursery School
Vernon Road
Kirkby-in-Ashfield
Nottingham
NG17 8EE

Dear Miss Bent

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Jeffries Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 26 January 2011, 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 second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2010. 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 Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services for Nottinghamshire.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2010:

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science across the school by:
 - improving the quality of teaching and learning in all classes
 - embedding the new assessment system fully across the school so that there is a clear view of each pupil's progress
 - setting aspirational but realistic targets for all groups of pupils and ensuring that they all know and understand their targets and how to improve their work
 - monitoring the impact of new initiatives to ensure that pupils in all classes make better than satisfactory progress.

- Improve governors' roles in challenging the school by:
 - involving them more fully in decision-making
 - providing support and training so that all governors understand what is expected of pupils
 - ensuring that they understand the importance of holding the school to account.

- Develop the curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children are able to make more choices about their learning.

Special measures: monitoring of Jeffries Primary and Nursery School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 26 January 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, staff, pupils, the school improvement partner, two members of the Governing Body, two local leaders of education and the community liaison officer.

Context

Since the last monitoring visit, there have been some further changes in staffing. The part-time teacher now undertakes small group work with pupils that require additional support to achieve their target grades. A new full time appointment has been made to Year 1 from this term. The Early Years Foundation Stage Co-ordinator is now working wholly within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Local leaders in education continue to work alongside class teachers and management. The deputy headteacher has a mentoring role with some staff and an advanced skills teacher provides support in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school has filled four of the five vacancies in the governing body including two parent governors and two local education authority representatives.

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

Achievement continues to improve and the school has now accurately identified where significant underachievement remains. The majority of pupils met their targets in English and mathematics last year. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 improved over the last two years in mathematics and writing and, in 2010, there was an improvement in reading as well. The school has clearly identified those who are not on target this academic year and currently too many children are significantly below target for mathematics. Since last October, gaps have been identified and pupils have been provided with individualised learning targets which are appropriately challenging. They understand much better what they have to do to get to the next level and their aspirations have been raised by staff, who have increasingly high expectations.

Pupils are now making better progress, which is often in line with that which is nationally expected. However, because of such low starting points and the legacy of past weaknesses in teaching and learning across the school, standards are still below where they should be. Disruption to teaching in some year groups has slowed pupils' progress. Writing remains a whole school focus as progress and standards are still too low. The opportunities for extending pieces of writing have been increased across all subject areas, and there has been a whole school drive on presentation.

Despite these improvements, scrutiny of pupils' work reveals that there is still a lack of quality and quantity of writing in most classes, particularly in Key Stage 1. The school has identified those children capable of achieving higher levels and provides work tailored to extending their thinking and problem solving. Pupils now receive their full entitlement to science and are now being thoroughly assessed in this area. Conversations with pupils confirmed that they are enjoying their learning more than in the past; in particular the boys seem much better engaged with their learning. However, the school has identified some gender issues in Years 5 and 6, where the progress of girls and boys is not always equivalent.

The school has a higher number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities than is typical, but a lower number of pupils with statements for these. Since the last visit, much focus has been given to improving the quality of their individual education plans, to mapping out their interventions and to evaluating the impact of these. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making better progress than previously. Only those interventions and mechanisms for support which are significantly helping to raise their achievement are being undertaken by the school. Assessment of these pupils has also improved; inline with overall systems of assessment across the school.

The school's targets for pupils' personal, social, and emotional development and communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage were exceeded in the last academic year. Targets are now also in place for problem solving, reasoning and numeracy as pupils' progress in these strands of learning was too slow. Attainment remains lower than is typical for children's age, although given their low starting points, the youngest children in the school continue to make good progress overall.

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science across the school – **satisfactory**

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils' behaviour continues to be consistently good. There is a calm, purposeful learning atmosphere across the school. Classes are well managed and new staff have established positive relationships with pupils quickly. Most children are well motivated, try hard and engage well with their learning. The school has successfully improved attendance, although this is slightly below the national average overall and remains low in the Early Years Foundation Stage; the school actively follows this up. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, but the school has good systems in place for the care and pastoral support of its pupils, aided by some effective community liaison work with families. The school continues to work on ways to build partnerships with parents and carers. The new style of setting homework and the opening up of the Early Years Foundation Stage unit to parents

and carers upon children's arrival encourages greater engagement of parents and carers with their children's learning, and in particular their reading. The school is also engaging more effectively with parents and carers of children with special educational needs.

The effectiveness of provision

Teaching is mostly good at Key Stage 2. Staff know the pupils very well, are assessing their progress regularly and are setting them aspirational targets. Planning is better adapted for the range of pupils. There is improved consistency across Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage, and, although inadequacies have been eradicated, too much satisfactory teaching is evident, including the teaching of phonics, which is patchy. The best lessons generally move at a good pace and children settle to learning quickly. Staff are increasingly developing skills in assessing pupils as they go along, although this is not yet embedded consistently across the school. Marking in books makes clear what pupils need to do next and how the work could be improved, although pupils are given insufficient time to correct their mistakes. In the weaker lessons, staff are not precise enough in their instructions; they change the instructions without good reason and do not always make the best use of time and resources. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by the school, local authority and now governors too, have highlighted what needs to change and staff are working really hard to improve. Pupils are now receiving their full curricular entitlement to science, which has now been given discrete time on the timetable. As this has only recently occurred, there is very little work to date in science books.

The quality of assessment has improved across the school and is accurate. Data is now reliable at Key Stage 1 and this has been verified through moderation. Assessment is informing the curriculum more effectively now in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage, where observations of children's learning are more regular than last term. The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage has further improved to provide more opportunities for children to make choices and to initiate their learning. Activities are generally of appropriate quality and provide sufficient learning. Staff are more aware of the learning potential of the activities. The outdoor area is being continually used throughout the sessions and there are now opportunities for free-flow play, which children are making the most of. Boys in particular seem to be much better engaged in their learning as a result.

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

- Develop the curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children are able to make more choices about their learning - **satisfactory**

The effectiveness of leadership and management

There continues to be dedicated commitment across the school to turning the school round and addressing the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Staff are still learning from all professionals who have had an input since the school was judged to require special measures, and in particular from visits to other schools where good and outstanding practice is evident. Local leaders in education are helping to develop whole school systems and to build capacity in middle management. Since the last monitoring visit, they have specifically helped to develop the use of teaching assistants and to support the school to narrow the gap in mathematics.

The headteacher has a clear vision of where the school is heading and the strategic improvement necessary. This fits well with the local authority's plan to bring about rapid improvement. Since last term, procedures for monitoring teaching, learning and assessment are more robust and senior and middle leaders have an accurate view of children's attainment and progress across the school. The impact of staff's increasing accountability to the headteacher and governors for their specific areas of responsibility and for the performance of their class is evident in the prompt identification of underachievement and in the raised progress of the pupils. Staff recognise that achievement remains too low and not all gaps in learning have yet been successfully filled. Some roles within school are still temporary or prone to change, and consistency and sustainability are still yet to be assured. There is improved stability in year one with a full time class teacher and, although early days, this is bearing fruit in improving the quality of teaching and learning in the class. There has been some external moderation of teacher assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, which is shown to be accurate. As a result, staff are more confident in assessment at the bottom end of the school.

The governing body has a mix of long serving and new members, who bring with them additional skills and energies. Through additional training and development, the governing body is now more aware of the strengths and weakness of the school and of its statutory responsibilities, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the curriculum. Governors are now providing more challenge to the school through their increased confidence and understanding of data and national expectations. Governors are involved in the monitoring and evaluating of the school through a properly worked out programme and monitoring policy, improving governors understanding of the quality of teaching and learning within the school.

The engagement of parents and carers has been further worked upon since the last monitoring visit. The special educational needs coordinator and the community liaison officer have strong links with families, which are having a positive impact on the attendance of parents at meetings to discuss their children's progress and the attendance of particular children at school.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:
Improve governors' roles in challenging the school – **satisfactory**

External support

The external support provided for the school by the local authority is of high quality. This has helped to provide staffing stability and improve teaching quality across the whole school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their aim to have 60% of teaching good or better by July 2010 has now almost been secured, although some inconsistencies have not yet been completely eradicated. The school improvement partner knows the school well and has been appropriately supportive and consistently accurate in his evaluation of the school. The local authority recognises that the school is not yet ready for support to be significantly diminished. The partnership with two local leaders in education continues to be very beneficial, with much good practice shared between schools. As a result, the legacy of children's underachievement is gradually reducing across the school and pupil's progress is improving. The local authority continues to work with the governing body, which has benefitted from further training and input as their strategic role is developing satisfactorily.

There are no further priorities for further improvement other than the ones issued at the time of the inspection in March 2010.