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Ms K Golden and Ms L Diamond
The Acting Headteacher and Executive Headteacher
Broadford Primary School
Faringdon Avenue
Harold Hill
Romford
Essex
RM3 8JS

Dear Ms Golden and Ms Diamond

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Broadford Primary School

Following my visit with Ann Sydney, Additional Inspector, to your school on 15 and 16 February 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 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.

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 Havering.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge
Additional Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise attainment and the rate of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - tracking pupils' progress more rigorously and taking action when individual pupils are not making enough progress
 - developing pupils' speaking and listening skills so that increased facility with language supports improvements of the quality of their writing
 - providing pupils with greater opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects
 - improving the partnership with parents and carers further so they can support children's learning more effectively at home.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - ensuring that senior leaders and managers provide better quality and timely information to the governing body so that governors are better informed and prepared to interrogate and robustly challenge the school's performance
 - ensuring that subject leaders are proactive and rigorous in their roles, have a clear focus on pupils' progress across the school and are held more accountable by senior managers
 - making sure that the senior leadership team maintains an overview of all that happens in the school, and has a much sharper insight into pupils' progress and attainment
 - taking action to increase pupils' awareness of diversity in the United Kingdom.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so that a much greater proportion is good or better and staff have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve by:
 - ensuring that lessons move at a brisker pace
 - setting work that is well-matched to pupils' different abilities
 - increasing the level of challenge to accelerate the progress of more-able pupils.
- Increase rates of attendance and improve punctuality through continued efforts with parents and carers, include taking action against those who do not send their children to school regularly.

Special measures: monitoring of Broadford Primary School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 15 and 16 February 2011

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, minutes of the monthly monitoring board and met with the executive and acting headteachers, phase leaders, pupils, members of the governing body, and representatives from the local authority.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the senior leadership of the school has been reorganised, including the governing body. Shortly after the last inspection, the headteacher left the school on long-term absence. The acting headteacher, who had been appointed as the acting deputy in September 2010, was asked to lead the school. Soon after, the governing body appointed an executive headteacher to work part time with the school each week. Her role is to implement the local authority action plan for school improvement and provide general support to the school. The governing body has a new committee structure and new chair. The school is moving to new premises in September 2011 when current building works are complete.

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

The school is beginning to raise the attainment of Year 6 pupils from the low overall levels noted in the last inspection report. Better analysis of emerging assessment information is leading to a greater proportion of pupils being on target to reach the expected levels from their starting points. There is still some way to go for pupils in Year 2, whose attainment has been low for some time, to reach the expected levels. Here too however, there are early signs of improving rates of progress. Appropriate attention is given in Nursery and Reception classes to develop children's understanding of letter sounds and early writing skills. Across the school, pupils' writing skills vary in quality, but the oldest pupils in the school are writing in a wider range of styles and for a range of purposes. In history and topic work, their writing is often too limited in length and presentation of work is often untidy. In mathematics, pupils across the school have improving basic number skills and knowledge of shape and measures, but their investigative skills develop more slowly.

Part of the reason why pupils, particularly those in Years 3 to 6, are making better progress is that since the last inspection specialist English and mathematics advisory support from the local authority has helped teachers to reshape aspects of their teaching. Reading skills through the school develop steadily, often through activities such as reading times or research. One class enjoyed learning about the sinking of the Titanic and writing a newspaper report and younger pupils liked reading through

instructions for their lesson activities. There remains some inconsistency between classes in the pace of learning. This is linked to variations in the quality with which teachers develop pupils' skills in activities or by missing opportunities to extend their learning more fully. Pupils' speaking skills vary in quality. While pupils generally enjoy a more active approach to learning, this does not always result in them expressing themselves with confidence or clarity about the things they are learning. Those that are most able often have extension tasks, but do not often start at a harder level than other pupils.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement:

- raise attainment and rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics – satisfactory.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils' considerate behaviour to others was noticeable during the visit. While pupils are happy to speak about their school, conversations are often short and to the point and do not readily revolve around what they are doing in lessons. Pupils behave well generally around the school, but when the pace of some lessons drops or the activity is less interesting, some become distracted easily or 'switch off' which hinders their learning. In an assembly about bullying, pupils behaved well.

The effectiveness of provision

Inspection evidence, together with the school's own extensive monitoring records, indicates that the proportion of secure and good teaching has increased. Nonetheless, teaching remains generally satisfactory as it does not always ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. The Broadford 'Learning Charter' which outlines expectations of teachers is helping them focus on the essential teaching skills. As a result, combined with external support, teaching in both literacy and mathematics in Years 1 to 6 has improved to secure levels. Efforts to remedy pupils' weaknesses are now targeted with more precision. Pupils have very clear and easily understood targets to help improve their attainment, when they engage in each piece of work. In some activities, the pace of learning leads to excellent learning. In an outstanding literacy lesson, for example, the pupils enjoyed developing a dilemma for a character to solve. The teacher checked pupils' learning regularly and pupils had a clear understanding at what learning levels they were working at. In less effectively taught activities, the aims of the lesson are not thought through fully enough by the teacher so that pupils gain maximum benefit from the activities they are doing. Opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening are sometimes missed. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children start activities with some enthusiasm and teachers generally plan worthwhile activities, but children often move on too quickly to something else before adults help them gain more from the activity. Throughout the school the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is consistent so that it offers comment on the success of the work and in most cases,

but not all, sets out clearly the next steps that can be taken to improve it still further.

The revised focus on developing pupils' basic skills through the curriculum is yielding some success in challenging and engaging pupils. Teachers' confidence in managing the new approaches is developing and varies at present. The school curriculum is partly shaped around topics when appropriate to make learning interesting. During the inspection, for example, Year 4 pupils visited the Tower of London to support their history topic about the Tudors. Planning of the curriculum has yet to make the most of children's natural curiosity in the Early Years Foundation Stage or to develop consistently good speaking opportunities for pupils. In Years 1 to 6 activities do not always have enough relevance to pupils' interests or have a 'real life' connection to help increase their motivation to find out more.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning so that a much greater proportion is good or better and staff have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The acting headteacher and executive headteacher work well together and have been very successful in developing a cohesive school community with a strong focus on improvement. The school's action planning, based upon the local authority statement of action, has been used very effectively to drive, monitor and review improvement. Parents and carers have benefited from the increased flow of information on actions taken since special measures were applied. There are more opportunities to engage in dialogue with the school about their child's progress and to attend more school events like assemblies. Teachers have responded positively to an intensive programme of monitoring and development of teaching and learning, which has successfully moved forward the quality of provision in the classroom in a relatively short time. The appointment of two acting deputy headteachers, responsible for both specific subjects and age groups, helps gather information to hold fellow teachers to account for pupils' progress. Other subject leaders are also now more aware of their responsibilities to monitor pupils' progress so that those falling behind are spotted quickly. The governing body, under new leadership, has benefited from focused training on ways of holding the school to account. They have also revised their committee structures to help them keep a clear overview of progress through their own meetings as well as attendance at monthly monitoring meetings. Pupils' levels of attendance have improved, hindered only by a small number of persistent absentees which the school is aware of and is actively addressing. Punctuality has also improved, but a small number of pupils still arrive late. Visits to parents and carers homes by the school's attendance officer and local welfare officer have helped some parents understand the importance of regular attendance and a prompt start to school.

The school's capacity to improve has strengthened as self-evaluation sharpens. Staff and members of the governing body are making increasingly effective use of the good and well-presented information about pupils' progress to help identify where improvement is most needed. The governing body and local authority are considering the options available to secure the long term leadership of the 'new' school in September, but in the short term have quickly ensured stability to both the day-to-day running of the school as well as prompting improvements in assessment, monitoring and to aspects of teaching. Issues relating to the promotion of community cohesion were not a focus for this inspection visit.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve the leadership and management of the school – good
- improve rates of attendance – satisfactory.

External support

The local authority's statement of action is a sharp and well-focused document which has been very well used by the school to drive, monitor and review its improvement actions. Support provided to the school has been very well tailored to its needs. Specialist advisory support in English and mathematics has been effective in reshaping provision in subjects where teachers' expertise is variable. The executive headteacher has worked effectively alongside the acting headteacher to coordinate local authority support and to ensure that it is channelled to areas of greatest need. A monthly 'Monitoring Board' meeting structure has been established to ensure that all those involved in the drive for improvement, such as local authority advisors, governors, and school leaders, can contribute to a review of performance. A new School Improvement Partner, appointed from within the local authority, helps maintain an impartial scrutiny of the school's performance.