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16 March 2011
Mr David Thomas
St Weonard's Primary School
Mount Way
St Weonard's
Hereford
HR2 8NU

Dear Mr Thomas

Special measures: monitoring inspection of St Weonard's Primary School

Following my visit to your school on Tuesday 15 March 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures 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 – good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

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 governors and the Director of Children's Services for Herefordshire.

Yours sincerely

Michael Smith

Her Majesty's Inspector



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Annex

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

- With immediate effect, meet requirements for keeping pupils safe and ensure that all pupils feel safe by:
 - ensuring all pupils' concerns are taken seriously and acted upon
 - providing more ways in which pupils can alert staff to their concerns
 - carrying out the required risk assessments
 - ensuring there are sufficient staff on duty at the after-school club.
- Eliminate inadequate teaching and improve pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of their pupils' capabilities so they are given more demanding tasks
 - making better use of assessment information to match tasks to pupils' abilities
 - ensuring pupils spend less time listening to the teacher and more time actively engaged in their learning.
- Improve the quality of self-evaluation by:
 - carrying out more frequent monitoring to clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, so that strengths can be built upon
 - ensuring the governing body has all information necessary for it to monitor the school's performance and challenge the school's senior management
 - using the data on pupils' progress to ensure staff are held accountable for the standards achieved in their classes.



Special measures: monitoring of St Weonard's Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 15 March 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met the headteacher, a group of pupils, the chair of governors, a group of governors and a representative from the local authority.

Context

Since the previous monitoring visit, the school has appointed two new members of staff, one full-time and one part-time, to replace staff who have left, two new governors and a new staff governor. The local authority has supported the school by providing training for the governors, support for subject leaders and support from the education welfare service with attendance. The school has also worked closely with other schools in the Wye Valley.

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

Children generally join the Reception class with skills and knowledge in line with those expected for their age.

Validated results for 2010 show that attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 was average. Key Stage 2 results show significant improvements to attainment, which was above average. The school has coordinated its systems of tracking pupils' progress so that now there is a clear overview of how well they are progressing. Targets are set on increased expectations of progress and, consequently, are more challenging than at the time of the previous visit. Pupils say that they feel more is expected from them and they are responding positively to the challenge. Information, from the tracking records and from pupils' books, show that progress is at least satisfactory and achievement is much improved this year.

Local authority consultants continue to support teachers to ensure that they have accurate assessments of the levels at which pupils are working.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Many elements of pupils' personal development and well-being continue to be good. Behaviour observed was good, with pupils engaged with their work. Incidents of off-task behaviour or low-level engagement which had been observed previously have been eliminated. Pupils are polite and friendly. They say that incidents of bullying are very rare and they feel safer and now know what to do if they have any concerns. The friendship post has been a welcome addition, along with the opportunity to use the 'bully box' to report any incidents. Pupils comment that they



have enjoyed working with the new staff and feel they are better challenged. As one pupil said, 'They don't just tell us, they help us learn.'

Attendance has risen and is well above average. The changes to the school's attendance policy have meant a significant reduction in the time pupils are taken out of school to accompany their parents on holiday. Pupils are able to identify how to improve the school through the school council. The council is chaired by a member of the governing body and, as such, pupils are able to inform governors directly on what needs to be improved and the governing body has a better understanding of the views of pupils. At the recent interviews for new staff, pupils formulated some interesting questions to ask candidates and some of these were used in the interview process.

The effectiveness of provision

Teaching observed during the visit was judged to be good overall. Lessons were challenging and met the needs of the different ages and abilities well. Questioning was used well to let pupils know what they had to learn and also to help them understand their work. At times, pupils' previous poor knowledge was a block to them making good progress but staff are aware of these shortcomings and are working hard to overcome these gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

The good relationships between staff and pupils and increased challenge, ensures that learning is good in lessons. Teaching assistants work well alongside teachers, including recording children's responses with the youngest children. Written praise and encouragement, along with advice, help pupils to improve their work.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy their learning and they have made a good start this year. A group were observed working well in designing a hat. One child showed mature use of textures with crayons, and others were keen to show how well they could count.

The curriculum is being extended to include a wider variety of activities and use of topics to develop pupils' skills in a variety of different contexts. Older pupils say they enjoy French and there is some good display to show the work on the Egyptians. Pupils receive good care from their teachers and, consequently, feel safe and secure. Because of the small size of the school, all pupils are known well as individuals.

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

- eliminate inadequate teaching and improve pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6
– good

The effectiveness of leadership and management



Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. The governing body and the school council consider the effectiveness of procedures at their respective meetings. This also means that the governing body is able to view any issues from the children's perspective.

The leadership of the school has improved significantly. The headteacher has formulated and implemented a clear programme of monitoring, including inputs from members of the governing body. He has observed all staff teach although, while the evaluations are well focused upon the quality of teaching, the quality of learning is less clear. There are plans to extend the monitoring to include inputs from the new subject coordinators now they have got to know their classes well. Leadership tasks are more distributed, and the team work well to support each other. Tasks are now delegated to willing colleagues, which reduces the burden upon the headteacher. Good partnership work with other schools within the Wye Valley has supported staff in developing expertise. This has meant staff who teach mixed-age classes are able to share concerns and expertise with staff from other schools who teach children of the same ages.

Members of the governing body have a good understanding of what is happening within the school. The information they get from the headteacher is far more focused upon progress in the main issues identified in the previous inspection. All information is given in a timely manner, including reports from meetings with the local authority. Members of the governing body, along with the senior leaders, have a clear overview of how well they are progressing. However, they now need to extend their ambition to include issues which were not identified as areas for improvement during the last inspection in order for the school to develop further.

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

- meet requirements for keeping pupils safe and ensure that all pupils feel safe – good
- improve the quality of self-evaluation – good

External support

The local authority continues to provide good support to the school. It has quickly involved officers to support issues identified in the previous monitoring visit. The education welfare service was very supportive in updating the school's attendance policy and identifying ways in which attendance could be improved. The governing body continues to get good support from the governor service officers. The School Improvement Partner works directly with the headteacher and has ensured a better understanding on how to extend leadership across the senior team and improve the capacity of the school. Good support from subject consultants has improved subject leadership and supported the school in ensuring accurate assessments of pupils' work.

