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23 September 2010

Miss Bent
Headteacher
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 with Jim Griffin, additional inspector, to your school on Tuesday 21 and Wednesday 22 September 2010, 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 first inspection since the school became subject to special measures in March 2010. 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 governors and the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services for Nottinghamshire.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – except for academies
- For the Secretary of State use the following email address:
CausingConcern.schools@dcyf.gov.uk)
- The lead and team inspectors.

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 first monitoring inspection on Tuesday 21 September 2010

Evidence

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

Context

Since the inspection two new teachers for Years 5 and 6 have been appointed to the school. One member of staff has returned from maternity leave on a part-time teaching basis. The remaining part of the post is currently vacant and has been advertised with a view to a permanent appointment from spring 2011. The Early Years Foundation Stage Coordinator is temporarily covering the post for this term. Local leaders in education continue to work alongside class teachers, mainly across the lower school. There are now five vacancies in the governing body including parent and local education authority representation. The school has been able to retain a class to a year group this academic year, although the number of pupils on roll is in decline.

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

Achievement has improved overall. 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. In the last year academic year, the school exceeded its targets for English and mathematics combined and the school is closer to national averages than it has been for many years. The majority of pupils made the expected amount of progress in English and made even better progress in mathematics. However, some pupils did not make enough progress and the legacy of insufficient progress over previous years means that standards are still below where they should be. Writing is still a major issue across the whole school where progress and standards are still too low, which is verified by a scrutiny of pupils' work. Too few pupils attain the higher levels in any subject at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Science also remains an issue across the school although, until now, both the school and the local authority support has been focused on English and mathematics. The legacy of underachievement in Key Stage 1 means that the current cohort has a long way to go to make up the ground from previous teaching inconsistencies and low expectations. Pupils are becoming increasingly aware of their targets, although some pupils believe that the targets given to them are still too easy. However, it is evident from lesson observations and conversations with pupils that expectations have been raised and pupils are enjoying their lessons more.

The school has focused on narrowing the gap between boys and girls and, by changing the curriculum and adopting more active styles of learning in many lessons, this is bearing fruit. 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. School's evidence shows that currently the progress of these pupils is in line with that of their peers, although the quality of their individual education plans is too variable. 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, although attainment remains lower than is typical for children's age and stage. Given their low starting points, however, the youngest children in the school are making good progress.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

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

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Behaviour across the school is consistently good. Classes are well managed and pupils want to work and do their best. The school has worked hard to improve attendance which is below the national average. Strategies put in place have had a marked impact at Key Stage 2, although attendance remains an issue for pupils in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains 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 effectiveness of provision

Teaching is now consistently good at Key Stage 2. There has been very little loss of momentum of learning in Key Stage 2 due to the strategic decision for pupils to retain their teachers from the end of the previous year. This has had a positive impact on pupils being more settled and work being more accurately pitched to their needs at the very beginning of term. There is not yet consistency across Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage, where some inadequacies and too much satisfactory teaching remain, including in the teaching of phonics. In the best lessons, the pace is good and explanations are clear. Lessons build effectively on what has gone before and learning is well matched to pupils' needs. The questioning by staff and the tasks provide good levels of challenge to pupils. Staff are particularly skilled at assessing pupils as they go along and intuitively know when further consolidation is needed or whether pupils are ready to move on. Marking in books makes clear what pupils need to do next and how the work could be improved. In the weaker lessons, the reverse is true. Pupils are sitting listening for extended periods and too little time is given to independent working and to complete

writing tasks. Staff are more intent on getting through the lesson plan at the expense of assessing pupils' progress. They are not sufficiently skilled to adapt the lesson and change the approach as they go along. Consistency remains an issue as staff are not always playing to their strengths. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by the school, local authority and now governors, too, have highlighted what needs to be improved. The school has yet to accurately identify where children's gaps are in their learning in all areas and teach to these. Because of the modification to the way that science is now taught in weekly blocks, it is likely that pupils are not receiving their full curricular entitlement to science.

The quality of assessment has improved in Key Stage 2 and is accurate. There remains a lack of reliable data at Key Stage 1. Assessment is not effectively informing the curriculum in Key Stage 1 or the Early Years Foundation Stage, where observations of children's learning are too few. The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been changed since the previous inspection to encompass many more opportunities for children to make choices and to initiate their learning. However, some of the activities are lacking in quality and do not provide sufficient learning. The school has improved the facilities available in the outdoor area, but they are massively underused and there is not enough opportunity for free-flow play.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- 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 is complete commitment across the school to turning the school round and addressing the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection and there has been no complacency about change. Staff have been keen to learn from all professionals who have had an input since the school went into the category of requiring special measures. 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. The management of the restructuring has been handled most effectively in Key Stage 2. More rigorous procedures for monitoring teaching, learning and assessment are having a marked impact at the upper end of the school. Staff are more accountable to the headteacher and governors for their specific areas of responsibility and for the performance of their class. They take these responsibilities very seriously indeed and are intent on making provision the best it can be. However, some roles within school are new or still subject to change, for example all of the core subjects. There is temporarily a lack of leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage due to other designated teaching commitments.

The school is evaluating its progress well, although it is too soon to establish if all of the interventions and initiatives have had an impact. There is a more intelligent use

of data in the upper school which has not yet been seen to the same extent in the lower school. As yet, there has been no detailed analysis of gaps in children's learning. There is very little external moderation to check the accuracy of teacher assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

The existing members of the governing body are long serving and also very committed. However, there is still much to do in equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to lead the school and drive improvement. The governing body is not sufficiently aware of its statutory responsibilities in some areas, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the curriculum. There remains an over-reliance on what the school provides for them, although this is improving. The next step is to widen the governors' understanding of the use of data and this is in hand. Governors are now more involved in the decision making and monitoring, which is a step forward.

The engagement of parents is continually worked upon. The special educational needs coordinator and the community liaison officer are developing 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. Staff are trying to involve parents more in their children's learning by engaging pupils with their parents in some of the homework tasks.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- Improve governors' roles in challenging the school – **satisfactory**

External support

The quality and impact of the external support provided for the school by the local authority, including the school improvement partner, is good. The impact of actions contained within the local authority's statement of action is also good, as it has served to reduce the legacy of underachievement across the school and provide stability and improved quality at the top end of the school. The local authority has supported the recruitment of high calibre permanent staff to help secure the quality of teaching. The aim to have 60% of teaching good or better by July 2010 has not yet been secured consistently, but the school is getting ever closer to this aim. Staff are receiving excellent quality input from two local leaders in education and are developing their planning and assessment methods and their classroom practices. A result of improved teaching at the top end of the school following the inspection, and the hard work by both staff and pupils, was reflected in improved standards in Key Stage 2 in the summer term. It is recognised that there is more to do, particularly at the lower end of the school. The local authority has continued to evaluate the school's progress and is clear where inroads have been made and where support needs to be specifically channelled. The local authority continues to work with the governing body and further training is planned. It has been less successful to date in helping the school to fill vacant posts and recognises that

developing the governing body's strategic role remains work in progress. The local authority is mostly on target for meeting all of its objectives as outlined in its plan.

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