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4 November 2011

Miss Natalie Packer Executive Headteacher
Belvoirdale Community Primary School
Scotlands Road
Coalville
LE67 3RD

Dear Miss Packer

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Belvoirdale Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 2 and 3 November 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 on 15 November 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is 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 – inadequate.

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 Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire.

Yours sincerely

Sheelagh Barnes
Additional Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise standards and achievement, particularly in English and mathematics at Key Stages 1 and 2, and ensure that pupils' achievement is commensurate with their capabilities.
- As a matter of some urgency, improve the quality of teaching and learning further, so that the large majority is good or better and has a positive impact on pupils' achievement by:
 - using data and other pupil information more effectively to plan activities that meet the needs of all pupils, particularly for higher attaining pupils and those who find learning difficult
 - ensuring teachers provide both oral and written comments to pupils that will help them to improve their work further
 - helping teachers to use questioning techniques more effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and lead to accelerated pupil progress
 - using time more effectively in lessons to ensure a brisk pace of learning.
- Ensure that school leaders and managers at all levels in Key Stage 1 and 2 improve the school's performance by:
 - rigorously monitoring and evaluating the impact of initiatives to improve pupils' attainment, achievement and progress
 - taking swift and effective actions to address weaknesses.

Special measures: monitoring of Belvoirdale Community Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 2 and 3 November 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and pupils' workbooks. Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board, a representative from the local authority, the newly appointed headteacher, the coordinator for special educational needs and/or disabilities and the subject coordinators for English and mathematics.

Context

There have been significant changes to staff, including those with management responsibility, since the summer term. As a result, during the current visit there were two temporary teachers and three newly appointed class teachers taking classes. Several of these were at early stages in their careers. The previous executive headteacher has moved to a new headship and a new executive headteacher is now in post. A new permanent headteacher has been appointed to start in January as well as a newly appointed deputy headteacher.

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

Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage remains good. Children enter school with skills which are below those expected for their age. They make good progress, so that by the time they start in Year 1, standards are in line with those expected nationally.

In Key Stage 1, there has been recent good progress in Year 2, particularly in the summer term. As a result, pupils have made up some of the ground they had lost. Standards in the end-of-year assessments showed improvement from 2010 in mathematics and reading, although these were still below national averages. In writing, standards dipped further. They were below previous levels and significantly below the national average. Current progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 is broadly satisfactory.

The progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, but inconsistent. Attainment in mathematics in the end-of-year assessments was broadly average, although the progress made by pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 in mathematics was less than that expected nationally. There was some improvement in results in English from the previous year, but standards were still below the national average. Progress from Year 2 to Year 6 was significantly less than is expected nationally. From lesson observations, scrutiny of books and discussions with pupils, progress in most classes is, currently, at least satisfactory. On occasion it is good. Those pupils

with special educational needs and/or disabilities who have had intervention through literacy support have made significantly better progress than their peers and also better than expected nationally as a result of this.

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

- Raise standards and achievement, particularly in English and mathematics at Key Stages 1 and 2, and ensure that pupils' achievement is commensurate with their capabilities – inadequate

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils enjoy school and talk about it enthusiastically. As a result, their attendance is average. They say that they particularly enjoy mathematics, science and art and opportunities such as 'golden time'. They speak enthusiastically about their teachers, who they believe care about them. Safeguarding is good and pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and how to keep healthy, although the choices they make at lunchtime do not always reflect the latter. They say that school is a pleasant place to be and that they are happy. They are confident that any issues or problems will be swiftly resolved. They are accepting of the behaviour-management systems, including the penalties for a 'yellow card', such as having to help others in the dining room. Pupils generally interact well with each other and with adults. Their behaviour is generally good, although there has been one recent exclusion. Pupils' contribution to the community is satisfactory. They are polite and considerate of others and keen to work for others less fortunate than themselves. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

The effectiveness of provision

All of the teaching throughout the school is currently at least satisfactory and a significant proportion is good. However, the school has fallen short of its target for 60% of teaching to be good by this time. This delay is largely due to a combination of changes of staff and teachers at the start of their careers settling into their new roles. As a result, the quality of teaching has not moved forward substantially since the previous monitoring inspection, despite the large amount of work undertaken by leaders and managers.

A new teaching and learning policy is in place. Marking has been reviewed and a new marking policy agreed. However, the implementation of this across the school is inconsistent. In several classes, the policy is not rigorously applied. This is particularly the case in marking and supporting the development of pupils' literacy skills in subjects other than English. Opportunities to help pupils develop writing skills in topic work are sometimes missed.

Assessment has improved and lessons are planned taking pupils' previous attainment into greater consideration than previously. Lessons are designed to interest boys and girls equally. As a result, all pupils have some aspects of their work that they are proud of and are eager to show these off and talk about them. There is now a more homogenous approach to presentation of work in most classes. However, presentation of writing by adults is not always as helpful an exemplar as it should be.

The school is aware that there is an inconsistency in its teaching of phonic skills (the sounds that letters make), as two different schemes are used in different parts of the school. Progress in developing skills in reading and writing regularly falters at the start of Key Stage 1, in part because of the transition between the two systems. Leaders plan to resolve this imminently. Assessment is used effectively to identify pupils who are falling behind and extra help is provided.

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

- As a matter of some urgency, improve the quality of teaching and learning further, so that the large majority is good or better and has a positive impact on pupils' achievement – inadequate

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The substantial changes to staffing have continued to impact negatively upon the school's performance. Consequently, progress and achievement have not improved enough, and the quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent and does not match the endeavour of leaders to improve outcomes for pupils. However, positive changes are in hand. The interim executive board has successfully appointed an extremely experienced headteacher. She is due to take up her post in January, along with a new deputy headteacher. The interim executive board has also developed its monitoring and supporting role and has increased regular involvement with the school. Rigorous monitoring has been undertaken by the current executive headteacher, the acting headteacher and by the coordinators for English, mathematics and special educational needs and/or disabilities. The monitoring is accurate and perceptive. It has resulted in action to review and tighten systems, such as developing the policy for teaching and learning. The English coordinator has recently monitored workbooks and given staff feedback on the consistency of their marking.

Training has been undertaken for the staff as a whole on a range of issues, additional to each teacher's individual professional development plan. The staff are positive and forward thinking and ambitious for the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school improvement planning is clear and contains suitably challenging targets. Good use is made of assessment to track the progress of all pupils to ensure equality of opportunity. Those who appear to be slipping behind are

provided with supplementary support. In the case of extra support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the measure of success is clear and unequivocal. With some other interventions, while there are signs that improvement is underway, it is not possible to quantify this as yet.

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

- Ensure that school leaders and managers at all levels in Key Stage 1 and 2 improve the school's performance – satisfactory

External support

The local authority is continuing to provide a good level of support for the school. The current action plan, which outlines significant support for the three areas for improvement highlighted in the original inspection, is monitored regularly. The quality of support, so far, has enabled systems to be reviewed, new procedures put into place and accurate evaluations made on all aspects of the school day. Staff training provided has included developing skills of leaders and managers as well as teachers and learning support assistants.