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30 November 2011

Mrs Avis Ball
Headteacher
Frogwell Primary School
Derriads Lane
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN14 0DG

Dear Mrs Ball

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Frogwell Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 28 and 29 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 in January 2011. 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 – good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly Qualified Teachers may be appointed to any key stage in the school.

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 Wiltshire.

Yours sincerely

Chris Nye
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2011

- Raise achievement in English and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - improving the quality of teaching and assessment
 - developing planning that effectively uses information about pupils' prior achievement to ensure that work set allows all pupils, including boys and the most able, to achieve their best
 - making sure that pupils know and understand their targets in English and mathematics and have an opportunity to refer to these regularly
 - ensuring that marking provides pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work.

- Ensure leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, are effective in driving forward improvements by:
 - using current data more effectively to gain a clear grasp of pupils' progress, both within subjects and as pupils move up through the school
 - developing a systematic cycle for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning
 - providing subject leaders with sufficient time so that the quality of monitoring has a sharper focus on measuring the impact of initiatives on pupils' progress.

Special measures: monitoring of Frogwell Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 28 and 29 November 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher and members of staff, groups of pupils and parents, the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors and representatives of the local authority.

Context

Since the last monitoring visit a decline in pupil numbers has led to a reduction of teaching staff by two and the extension of mixed-age classes from Years 3 and 4 to include Years 5 and 6. The deputy headteacher has returned from maternity leave and has taken over responsibility for coordinating the English curriculum. One new parent governor has joined the governing body.

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

Raising achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, continues to be the main focus of the school's work. Since the last monitoring inspection, strategies that had then been put in place to eradicate inconsistencies in pupils' progress and raise standards are now embedded across the school. Although the speed of progress varies, pupils' achievement overall is improving significantly, especially in English.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils make good progress, especially in communication, language and literacy, and this is built upon in Key Stage 1. In Year 2, at the end of the last academic year, reading attainment was similar to that found in other schools nationally, and better than this in writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, attainment in English and mathematics was well below average, as expected. However, inspection evidence confirms the school's own data that since September there has been a considerable improvement in pupils' achievement in English and mathematics across the school. Detailed and accurate assessment data indicates that pupils are on track to achieve challenging targets. Progress in Key Stage 1 is particularly impressive in reading, writing and mathematics, where standards have improved significantly. In Key Stage 2 the rate of progress dips slightly in the middle years, especially in mathematics, although suitable strategies have been put in place to remedy this. In Year 6 pupils are on track to make the expected levels of progress and attain on or above national averages in English, but the school recognises the need to accelerate progress more in mathematics in order to achieve their targets. Overall, however, there is secure evidence that attainment in both English and mathematics is on track to be considerably better than in previous years.

The school rigorously monitors pupils' attainment and progress and there is secure evidence that the achievement gap between boys and girls is narrowing and that the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is accelerating, relative to their starting points. Although the school is rightly planning to monitor in more depth the impact of intervention strategies in Key Stage 2, the focus on areas such as phonics throughout the school is already having a positive impact on raising standards in reading and writing.

The underlying reason for an improvement in pupils' achievement is the positive and determined ways in which the school has responded to local authority support and improved the quality of teaching and assessment. As a result, pupils are much more engaged with their learning and say that they enjoy their lessons. Higher teacher expectations and carefully differentiated planning is helping to challenge the more able pupils and accelerate their progress.

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

- Raise achievement in English and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 – good.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Attendance continues to improve steadily, with effective strategies in place, but not yet fully embedded, to address issues such as lateness. Behaviour during the monitoring inspection was consistently good. The strong focus that has been placed on 'learning how to learn' and ensuring that teaching and the curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils is at the heart of pupils' positive attitudes towards school. They appreciate the support that they are given and work and play well together.

The effectiveness of provision

Teachers' confidence and skills are continuing to develop and there has been a secure and consistent improvement in the quality of teaching since the last monitoring inspection. Recently introduced initiatives, especially with regard to planning lessons and assessing pupils' progress, are now securely embedded and demonstrating positive impacts on pupils' achievement. During the monitoring inspection no inadequate teaching was observed and most was good, with some that was outstanding.

The features of good teaching, which were observed across the school, included: very well-planned and -structured lessons which clearly linked to pupils' prior learning and ensured that the needs of pupils with a wide range of abilities were met; incisive and challenging questioning which ensured learning progressed at a brisk pace; well-designed activities which captured the pupils' interests and enthusiasm; and excellent relationships and management of pupils' behaviour.

Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Generally, teachers have high expectations and pupils are keen to do well as a result. Where teaching is less effective, the pace is slower and pupils are inactive for too long.

Pivotal to the improvement in teaching is the focus on the effective use of strategies to assess pupils' attainment, track their progress and ensure that teaching is adjusted to meet their developing needs. The impact of externally provided training and coaching in this area has been significant and, as a result, teaching now has a much sharper focus on improving achievement. For example, frequent reference to learning objectives and targets in lessons is helping to raise pupils' awareness of their learning and progress. The new marking policy is being consistently applied and is providing pupils with clear and concise guidance on how to improve. Effective strategies such as 'assessment ladders' are being effectively used across the school to help pupils evaluate their own progress against clearly defined targets, although there is scope for developing this further through recording how, and when, weaker aspects of pupils' learning have been addressed.

The curriculum is designed well to meet the needs and interests of pupils and support teaching. Cross-curricular links are used well. For example, pupils were enthusiastically designing pamphlets using persuasive writing techniques to attract volunteers to the Land Army in a topic on the Second World War.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leaders at all levels have maintained a rigorous pace in their drive to improve the school and are working with a strong sense of collegiality to address the weaknesses identified in the inspection report of January 2011. Detailed and effective improvement and action plans, which focus on areas of weakness, have been kept under close review. The development of systematic monitoring systems and a detailed assessment cycle has helped to keep leaders accurately informed about the pace of progress in meeting strategic targets. As a result leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and where weaknesses remain. There is now a sharper focus on measuring the impact of initiatives on outcomes for pupils. For example, clear plans to improve pupils' mathematical calculation and problem solving are having a positive impact in Key Stage 1, but leaders recognise that more needs to be done to accelerate progress in these areas in Key Stage 2.

Senior leaders are using pupils' assessment and progress data very effectively to monitor the impact of teaching. Regular pupil progress meetings are held with class teachers to identify pupils who are making slower-than-expected progress and identify suitable interventions to remedy this. Senior leaders are monitoring teaching rigorously against clear criteria and this is also helping to drive forward improvements. The internal and external moderation of pupils' work and joint

observations of teaching with external consultants, such as the advisory headteacher, are verifying the accuracy of leaders' judgements.

The recent improvements in the governing body identified at the last monitoring inspection are now securely embedded. Effective support and training from the local authority and good communications with senior leaders mean that governors now have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and how this is reflected in performance data. As a result, they are providing a much more effective and informed balance between challenge and support, which is having a positive impact on the morale of staff and performance of the school.

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

- Ensure leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, are effective in driving forward improvements – good.

External support

The local authority's action plan to address the issues identified in the last inspection has been monitored closely and suitably updated to reflect the progress that the school has made. Regular conferences have been held to evaluate in detail the impact of the plan, and this continues to be fit for purpose. The quality of support being provided by the local authority is good and the work of the advisory headteacher in particular has had a significant impact on helping the school address its weaknesses.