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27 January 2012

Mrs S Waters
The Executive Headteacher
Andover Church of England Primary School
East Street
Andover
SP10 1EP

Dear Mrs Waters

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Andover Church of England Primary School

Following my visit with Gail Robertson, Additional Inspector, to your school on 25 and 26 January 2012 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 March 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 – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – 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 Interim Executive Board, the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire and the Diocese of Portsmouth and Winchester.

Yours sincerely

Elisabeth Linley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise attainment and progress in English and mathematics by improving the quality of teaching and learning, ensuring that:
 - teachers make effective use of day-to-day assessments to plan the next steps in pupils' learning
 - teachers and teaching assistants take time to question the pupils and discuss activities with them, in order to check their understanding and encourage independent learning
 - learning is made more enjoyable and interesting for pupils through the full implementation of a skills-based, creative curriculum.
- Improve self-evaluation and leadership and management at all levels by:
 - rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching, taking account of pupils' learning and progress
 - using assessment information to quickly identify underachievement, which leads to swift and effective intervention to support improvement
 - ensuring that the governing body rigorously monitors the performance of the school, especially the attainment and progress of pupils
 - developing shared leadership roles and responsibilities among senior staff related to improving teaching and learning and raising achievement.

Special measures: monitoring of Andover Church of England Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 25 and 26 January 2012

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and pupils' work. They met with the executive headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of teaching staff, pupils, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and representatives from the local authority.

Context

There have been a significant number of changes in staffing since the school's first monitoring visit in September 2011. The deputy headteacher left the school in October 2011 and the headteacher and Year 2 teacher left at the end of the autumn term. An acting deputy headteacher worked in the school from October until the end of the term. A National Leader in Education is currently leading the school as executive headteacher; she worked in school in a part-time capacity from the end of November and is now full time. Three additional members of staff have joined the school on a temporary basis; two have taken on the roles of acting deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator. Another four temporary teachers are teaching in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4. At the time of the monitoring visit three permanent teachers were absent from school owing to ill health. At the end of October 2011, the governing body was replaced by an interim executive board. The number of pupils on role has declined to 177.

Achievement of pupils at the school

A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that most pupils are now making better progress in English and mathematics. Underachievement is being reduced as the school is tackling inadequate teaching. Where weaknesses in teaching remain, pupils do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable. Conversely, where teaching is consistently good, pupils make good progress. This was seen in Years 1 and 6 where lessons challenged pupils of different needs and abilities to achieve their best. However, there is not enough good teaching in school to ensure that standards are raised at a faster pace. Even so, the staff are beginning to link the curriculum better through topic work which has resulted in pupils' improved enjoyment and, as a result, the progress they make. Leaders are clear, however, that more is to be done to ensure that pupils' basic skills are developed effectively across the curriculum and in every class.

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

- raise attainment and progress in English and mathematics – satisfactory.

The quality of teaching

Teachers are developing in confidence and feel better able to approach the coordinators for English and mathematics, and senior leaders, for guidance and support. The staff have benefited from training, for example for guided reading which now features in all classes on a daily basis. Work with the mathematics consultant has also identified where improvement is required and what can be done to secure it. As a result, teaching is beginning to improve. Where there is good teaching in school, lessons are characterised by the high expectations of teachers for pupils to achieve their best. These lessons are well organised and planned to meet the needs of individual pupils and, as a result, pupils are engaged, want to learn and are successful. In addition, the teachers' questioning is well focused and aids the effective day-to-day assessment of pupils' learning. However, in weaker lessons, teachers' questioning is not as strong, often ascertaining whether or not something is correct rather than how pupils arrive at their conclusion.

Although improvements have been made, not enough teaching is good and weaknesses remain. For example, one concern is the security of some teachers' skills to manage pupils' behaviour effectively during lessons. Although work to improve this aspect of teaching has begun, more remains to be done. Similarly, there is inconsistency among staff in their approach to planning, although real improvements have been made in planning to meet the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, the school has yet to ensure that all staff and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a clear understanding of what children will learn when they choose activities for themselves.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils talk positively about school. They say they feel safe and that they enjoy most of their learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about mathematics; the school's new approach to the mathematics curriculum is beginning to pay dividends in terms of enjoyment. However, pupils feel that lessons in literacy are not as much fun and it is clear that when pupils are not engaged in their learning, a minority of boys and girls do not behave as well as they might. However, most pupils have good attitudes to learning and are respectful of others.

Pupils are encouraged to believe in themselves and to persevere; they are responding well to the view that all can be 'champions', as celebrated during a school assembly. Pupils are proud of their responsibilities in school, such as assembly monitors. A group of Year 6 pupils have also recently been trained to partner Year 3 pupils to help with their spelling and reading. The pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their improved attendance and this in turn reflects the school's improved work with parents, carers and pupils to celebrate and encourage their regular and timely attendance at school.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The executive headteacher is providing a strong steer for the school to improve. There is a clear focus on learning for all and there is a real belief that improvement is possible as the staff feel empowered to make the changes required. The interim executive board is also challenging the school with well-focused and rigorous questions. In order to aid the school's rapid improvement through effective self-evaluation, the board's plan to monitor and evaluate the work of the school is set to begin immediately.

The focus on eradicating inadequate teaching has been largely successful, although weaknesses remain. Similarly, although the tracking of pupils' progress had been implemented, the accuracy of the assessment data gathered was a cause for concern. Improvements in this respect have been made. As a result, the school is in a better position to provide data that will in the future show the progress that pupils have made against a secure benchmark of assessment information. The setting of individual targets to aid pupils' ownership of their improved progress is inconsistent throughout school. The introduction of 'two stars and a wish', and improvements in marking, are a positive start. Similarly, work in pupils' books shows that many pupils are beginning to make progress at an improved rate. This is better where teaching is consistently good.

Of significant concern has been the accurate identification of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and the appropriateness of the interventions and provision that was put in place to meet their needs. A rigorous review of identification and provision has now taken place. Links with parents and carers have been improved in this respect and pupils with particular needs are now correctly identified. Interventions are beginning and the early signs show that they are making a positive difference to pupils' confidence and achievement.

Teachers have benefited from training and recent guidance. A new approach to the mathematics curriculum has been introduced and work to improve the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum has been implemented. As a result of effective support, the environment for learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is much improved as is the children's engagement. Similarly, the English and mathematics' coordinators report very positively about guidance they have received to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. They are now well placed to assist in a more rigorous approach to this important aspect of the school's work. The coordinators are also beginning to develop curriculum links across the different subjects through themed topics. They have yet to ensure that the development of pupils' basic skills is systematically planned throughout school and across the curriculum and that all teachers take ownership of this work. However, although planning remains inconsistent, teachers are now planning together which provides peer support.

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

- improve self-evaluation and leadership and management at all levels – satisfactory.

External support

The school has benefited from the local authority's support to secure the leadership and management of the school. This is exemplified by the setting up of the interim executive board, securing the services of a National Leader in Education and of other seconded members of staff that have underpinned the new leadership and management of the school. In addition, the staff continue to receive valued training and guidance from the local authority, for example through the work of consultants.