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25 April 2012

Mr L Mason-Edwards
Headteacher
Peel Park Primary School
Peel Park Drive
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD2 4PR

Dear Mr Mason-Edwards

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Peel Park Primary School

Following my visit with Ray Biglin, Additional Inspector, to your school on 23 and 24 April 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 third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in December 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 – good

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

Newly-Qualified Teachers may now be appointed in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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 Strategic Director - Services to Children and Young People.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Alexander
Additional Inspector

January 2012



Annex

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

- Raise attainment and achievement in all subjects, but particularly in writing by:
 - improving the quality of teaching to at least good throughout the school, especially by using assessment information effectively to raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and to ensure that work is matched to their interests and abilities
 - making clear to pupils how to improve their work
 - improving the quality of the curriculum to take account of pupils' prior learning and raise their aspirations
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills.

- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - ensuring that school leaders provide a clear and sustainable direction for school improvement
 - increasing the effectiveness of monitoring systems to improve teaching and in checking that effective action is taken to tackle weaknesses
 - embedding the tracking of pupils' performance so that rapid action can be taken to tackle underachievement.

Special measures: monitoring of Peel Park Primary School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 23 and 24 April 2012

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, the senior management team, the local authority's Primary Improvement Partner, the Chair of the Governing Body and a consultant headteacher from a local school. Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils. Seventeen lessons were observed taught by 16 teachers and inspectors listened to a number of pupils read from Year 1 and Year 2.

Context

The school continues to go through a time of significant change. Since the last monitoring inspection three teachers have been on a period of long-term absence, although one member of staff has recently completed a phased return to work. The support of a consultant headteacher from a nearby school remains in place. Reduction in the support offered by a deputy headteacher seconded from the local authority is now being planned. A new deputy headteacher and five additional members of staff have been appointed and will take up their posts in September. Although the double-storey mobile unit continues to be home for the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, building work has started on the planned expansion of the school premises.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Pupils enjoy their time at school, which offers a warm and welcoming learning environment. Across the school, pupils are now much better informed of their targets and improvements in marking are helping them understand how to improve the quality of their work. Year 6 pupils have recently conducted a 'Knowledge Harvest' which provided the opportunity to identify areas of learning where they still feel in need of support. This has enabled teachers to match work carefully to pupils' individual needs. This is helping to narrow the gaps in their attainment, particularly in writing. It is also helping to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem before they transfer to secondary school.

A wide range of evidence demonstrates that across the school the vast majority of pupils is now making much faster progress than previously in reading, writing and mathematics. Areas of weakness identified at the last monitoring inspection are being successfully tackled. For example, the school was asked to accelerate the progress pupils in Year 3 and Year 5 made in mathematics. Senior leaders and staff responded swiftly and implemented a range of strategies which has ensured that the number of pupils making slow progress has fallen significantly. Many are now working at the faster pace of others in the school.

Across the school, the number of pupils now working at age-related expectations is also rising. For the majority of pupils, gaps in their prior learning are closing more quickly.

However, there remains some variation. For example, age-related attainment in mathematics is much higher in Year 6 than it is in Year 4.

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

- Raise attainment and achievement in all subjects, but particularly in writing – good

The quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is improving. Work seen in pupils' books, school assessment data and lessons observed demonstrate that the proportion of good lessons is increasing and some are now outstanding. At the same time, the percentage of lessons judged inadequate is also falling significantly. Staff are responding positively to the expectation set by senior leaders and are keen to implement the advice given. Consistency in the quality of teaching across the school is improving, although some variation still remains.

In the best lessons teachers are using what they know about pupils' attainment increasingly well to plan curriculum activities and match work to pupils' abilities and interests. Lessons are well-paced and pupils enjoy their learning, which moves along swiftly. Increasingly, teachers are also ensuring that pupils practise their basic skills across a range of subjects. An example of this was observed in a Year 4 English lesson, where pupils were plotting their emotions on a graph in response to a descriptive writing exercise. Teaching assistants are increasingly well-informed, quickly deployed and effectively helping pupils, for example, those with disabilities or who have special educational needs make much faster progress in their lessons. A notable feature in a growing number of lessons is how well pupils work independently for sustained periods of time.

This better practice is still not consistent across the school and, although fewer in number, there remain some lessons where work is not as well-planned. Activities are not pitched at the right level and therefore fail to capture the interest of pupils. As a result, some pupils in these lessons become passive or restless, while others become mischievous.

The quality of teaching within the Early Years Foundation Stage continues as a strength of the school. Children are provided with a wide range of activities, which they enjoy. They are free to choose from well-planned activities both indoors and outside. Staff are well-deployed and are meeting children's learning needs increasingly well. For example, children were engrossed in The Peel Park garage mending trikes, fixing number plates and hand-washing cars. Boys and girls co-operated very well together and the activity sparked conversations which adults developed effectively.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Two main factors are helping to raise pupils' attendance successfully. First is the strategic approach taken by the school to work in partnership with parents and carers and outside agencies. Second is pupils' own desire to attend this improving school. There continues to be significant improvement in reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

The school has introduced a new behaviour policy and reward system. This has been implemented well and, as a result, incidents of unacceptable behaviour are falling. Staff respond swiftly and consistently when, on the few occasions, behaviour problems arise. Consequently, pupils say they are well cared for and that they feel safe and secure within school. They explain that when problems occur they trust staff to help resolve their concerns quickly. They speak knowledgeably about many forms of bullying and how to avoid conflict.

Within class there is a direct correlation between the quality of teaching and pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work. The vast majority of pupils is behaving increasingly well and are motivated by work which engages their interests. However, this is not the case in a small minority of lessons.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

A significant feature of the improvements seen since the last monitoring inspection is how well leadership and management responsibilities are becoming distributed among senior staff. This is helping to build the capacity of the school to improve. Senior leaders have developed a range of strategies to monitor the performance of teachers and the progress of pupils, which are now becoming embedded across the school. They are successfully reducing the proportion of inadequate lessons by implementing agreed procedures, which offer a balance of support and challenge.

The work of the governing body is also improving. They are increasingly well-informed, strengthened by new members and holding the school to account with increasing rigour. The Chair of Governing Body, together with experienced members, is also holding the governing body to account for the impact they are having in school improvement.

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

- Improve the leadership and management of the school – good

External support

The additional support provided by consultants and external advisers is having a good impact. As a result, the local authority is now working in partnership with senior leaders to plan a strategic reduction of the support offered as the capacity of the school continues to improve.