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15 June 2012

Mrs Carina Jacobs
Headteacher
Wimborne Junior School
Wimborne Road
Southsea
Hampshire
PO4 8DE

Dear Mrs Jacobs

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Wimborne Junior School

Following my visit with Julie Sackett, Additional inspector, to your school on 13 and 14 June 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in January 2012. 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

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 Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Portsmouth.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline White
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2012

- Eradicate underachievement in writing by:
 - raising pupils' and teachers' expectations so that when writing, pupils consistently use the writing skills they have learnt in previous lessons
 - planning sufficient time and opportunities for pupils to produce extended pieces of writing and to write for a sustained period of time
 - providing greater opportunities for pupils to practise the skills they have learned in literacy lessons, when writing in other subjects.

- Secure satisfactory or better progress in mathematics by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what all pupils are capable of achieving in each mathematics group and by ensuring that work is sufficiently challenging, especially for the most able
 - improving teachers' knowledge about pupils' progress in order to better track their achievement and plan work accordingly.

- Accelerate the pace of improvement of teaching so that, by February 2013, teaching is good or better, by:
 - using assessment information to inform planning, so tasks and lessons are well matched to all pupils' abilities
 - improving the pace of lessons so that all pupils are actively engaged and involved in their learning at all times
 - making better use of additional adults in lessons and ensuring their input is carefully planned for.

Special measures: monitoring of Wimborne Junior School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 13 and 14 June 2012

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and pupils' work, and met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.

Context

The school population has remained stable with 297 pupils on roll. Most children are of White British heritage with approximately 15% from minority ethnic groups. Of these, a below average number speak languages other than English. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations set for attainment and progress.

There has been some turnover of staffing since the school's previous inspection. A new literacy coordinator took up her post at Easter. A curriculum leader and two class teachers will join the staff in September 2012. The school currently has one vacancy but a recruitment process is underway. A new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Raising pupils' achievement is firmly at the heart of the school's agenda. Assessment information is far more reliable as a result of regular, thorough moderation and is being used to lift expectations and develop teachers' understanding of progression in subjects. The impact of this work is evident in the school's performance data which indicate that standards are rising in English, including writing, and mathematics. The progress of individuals and groups of pupils is discussed routinely and in detail. Consequently, underachievement is picked up and early, appropriate interventions are put in place.

Pupils' engagement with learning is deepening because the more varied and flexible provision in English and mathematics is capturing their interest and better meeting their needs. Pupils are enthusiastic about the Big Write and Big Maths projects. They enjoy the increased challenge and are responding well to opportunities to apply learning and develop independence in literacy and numeracy.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement.

- Eradicate underachievement in writing – satisfactory.

- Secure satisfactory or better progress in mathematics – satisfactory

The quality of teaching

Teaching is strengthening with a growing proportion that is good. Of the 14 lessons observed, teaching and pupils' achievement were satisfactory in eight and good in six. Where pupils were achieving well, expectations were high with appropriately challenging learning objectives. Lessons were conducted at a lively pace. Activities were imaginative, carefully sequenced and personalised to accelerate progress and promote independence. Teaching assistants were well deployed and supported pupils' learning effectively. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and modelled successful learning with expertise. Their marking of pupils' work set out the next learning steps and incorporated clear guidance about how they could be secured.

Where teaching is less effective, key common inconsistencies relate to:

- the use of assessment information to plan lessons that build systematically on pupils' prior learning
- the development of pupils' capacity to apply new learning and gain independence
- ensuring pupils know how to improve their subject-specific skills.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement.

- Accelerate the pace of improvement of teaching – satisfactory

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school is an orderly and harmonious community. Pupils from all backgrounds play and work together happily. They feel safe and well cared for. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and this is reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils welcome opportunities to take responsibility and participate in decision making. In lessons, they are developing the confidence to work independently but opportunities to secure these important learning skills vary in quality from class to class.

The school has a clear behaviour management policy which includes a well-established rewards system. Pupils were observed in an assembly where awards were given for good conduct and work. They were proud to have their achievements recognised and very supportive of each other. The behaviour management system is observed by all staff but some are more effective in implementing it than others.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Leaders, including governors, are ambitious for the school and the success of every pupil. The headteacher has made the transition from deputy headteacher well. She gives clear direction to the work of the school and has established a shared vision of improvement. Expectations have risen and staff are clear about their accountability for pupils' progress. The monitoring of teaching is systematic and self-evaluation is exacting. Middle leaders are involved in these processes. Currently, they are closely guided by senior leaders but are growing in confidence. The literacy and numeracy coordinators are following through clear and appropriate action plans which are having an impact on the quality of provision, pedagogy and pupils' progress.

While the reviewed curriculum better meets the needs of pupils, topic work is not sufficiently tailored and opportunities are missed to make links with, and consolidate, learning in literacy and numeracy.

The governing body has been restructured and significantly strengthened. A return to a formal committee structure with clear terms of reference explicitly connected to the school's priorities for improvement has increased the robustness of governors' support and challenge. A management intervention board is effective in providing governors with guidance and opportunities for training. Governors recognise that while their skills in analysing and interpreting performance data are improving they require further development. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements.

External support

The local authority's statement of action in support of the school is fit for purpose. Support has been well targeted and effective, particularly in relation to strengthening teaching and contributing to precisely focused improvement plans.