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13 July 2012

Mrs Parker
Acting Headteacher
Hawthorn Primary School
Elmham Road
Cantley
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN4 6LQ

Dear Mrs Parker

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Hawthorn Primary School

Following my visit with Ann Taylor, Additional Inspector, to your school on 10 and 11 July 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 for Children and Young People's Service for Doncaster.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell

Her Majesty's Inspector



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Annex

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

- Raise pupils' achievement, including for those pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs, by ensuring that:
 - teachers always set high expectations in lessons and use questions which challenge and develop pupils' thinking
 - all teaching enthuses pupils and engages them effectively in their learning
 - further opportunities are provided in different subjects for pupils to develop their skills in writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT)
 - the provision for those pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs caters for their individual needs
 - learning tasks are matched to different levels of ability and provide all pupils with an appropriate level of challenge
 - marking and feedback are of a consistently good quality and ensure pupils know how to improve.

- Improve behaviour and safety by ensuring that:
 - behaviour is managed consistently well in lessons across the school
 - the newly developed procedures for reducing persistent absence are applied rigorously.

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all leaders rigorously monitor the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement
 - appropriate training leads to measurable improvements in teaching quality
 - subject coordinators are provided with regular opportunities to monitor teaching and learning through observation of lessons within their subjects
 - members of the governing body rigorously monitor the school's work and comply with statutory requirements in relation to health and safety
 - safeguarding procedures meet requirements.



Special measures: monitoring of Hawthorn Primary School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 10 and 11 July 2012

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, acting headteacher, staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.

Context

In July 2012 the deputy headteacher was appointed as acting headteacher in the temporary absence of the headteacher. In April 2012, the headteacher of a neighbouring primary academy was appointed as an executive headteacher to provide additional support and direction. The governing body of Hawthorn School decided in May 2012 to set up a joint school improvement committee made up of governors from Hawthorn School and the partner academy. The role of this group is to monitor and evaluate Hawthorn School's progress and to determine the strategic direction of the school.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Confirmed, but unpublished, Key Stage 2 results show improved attainment and progress in English and mathematics in 2012. Attainment in English was a key weakness at the time of the previous inspection and attainment is now higher in both reading and writing. However, attainment in writing remains lower than in reading. Attainment was significantly weaker in English than in mathematics in 2010 and 2011. In 2012, this gap was reduced. In 2012, the proportion that gained at least Level 4, as expected for their age, was a little higher in English than mathematics, however, the average points score was lower. In mathematics, the proportion gaining at least Level 4 was lower than in 2011, though the proportion gaining Level 5 was higher and the average points score was higher. The proportion of pupils making at least two levels of progress at Key Stage 2, in both English and mathematics, was better than in the previous three years. Improved achievement in Year 6 is due to improved teaching and the impact of the introduction of extra tuition in literacy and numeracy before and after school and in the holidays.

School assessment data indicate that children have maintained their levels of progress at the Early Years Foundation Stage. At the end of Key Stage 1, teacher assessment, which was externally moderated, shows an overall improvement in reading, writing and mathematics, compared with the low results in 2011. However, attainment is still lower than in 2010; attainment in reading and writing continues to be weaker than in mathematics; and fewer pupils gained the expected Level 2b or above in reading. In Year 1, school data show that a higher percentage of pupils are working at the level expected for their age. As a result of improvements in the teaching of letters and sounds, the large majority of pupils in Year 1



met the required standard in the new national phonics screening check. School data indicate improved achievement in other year groups at Key Stage 2. However, achievement has not improved in Year 4 due to weaker teaching and sporadic staff absence.

Learning has improved as a result of improved behaviour. Pupils have responded positively to the new and more consistent procedures for managing behaviour in classrooms with the result that there are fewer interruptions to learning. Pupils are working in a more sustained way, although concentration is not always as good in the afternoon topic work. The learning by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has improved as a result of improved behaviour management and the clearer direction to the work of learning support assistants.

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

- raise pupils' achievement, including for those pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs – satisfactory

The quality of teaching

The proportion of inadequate teaching has been reduced and the management of behaviour has improved. These changes have improved the climate for learning and have enabled more pupils to make better progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. However, there is still some variability. The better teaching has precise objectives, engages pupils well by drawing on their knowledge and understanding and matches the tasks to different levels of ability. In teaching that is less effective, pupils' learning is consolidated rather than extended; questioning asks for factual recall rather than pupils' thinking and personal response; lesson starters and plenaries do not provide a sharp enough focus on specific aspects of learning. As a result of the introduction of a revised marking policy, marking and verbal comment provide more consistent feedback to pupils about how to improve.

The teaching of phonics has improved by re-grouping pupils, increasing the use of talk-partners, focusing more on particular skills and providing additional support for slower learners. Leaders recognise that the teaching of writing across the school is not securely enough based on the assessment of individual learning needs and does not always focus precisely enough on pupils' personal learning targets. In addition, the teaching of particular skills is not always focused sharply enough to improve these skills or sustained sufficiently to consolidate them. The moderation of assessment with the partner academy has begun to deepen teachers' understanding of the features of writing at different levels.

The needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have been re-identified with more specific reference to their needs in relation to literacy, numeracy and behaviour. Individual Education Plans have been tightened up to give more specific targets for improvement and more specific guidance on strategies to be used by the class teacher



and learning support assistants. The impact of these plans on the progress of pupils with special educational needs has not yet been reviewed.

Increased opportunities have been provided for pupils to use and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, for example, in history and geography. Leaders have accurately identified the need to further develop the curriculum and the teaching of the foundation subjects and science, through more precise planning for the learning of subject specific skills. Enterprise activities by older pupils have raised funds for out of school activities that have contributed to their increased enthusiasm for learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

A new behaviour policy with clearer and more consistently applied procedures has resulted in improved behaviour. Staff are managing the behaviour of more challenging pupils better, especially at Key Stage 1 where behaviour was a key concern. However, there are still inconsistencies. Although reduced, incidents of weaker behaviour persist in Year 1, partly because of the large size of the class. In addition, the level of fixed-term exclusions has not reduced. The school recognises the need to analyse patterns of behaviour more closely, meet individual needs better and further reduce incidents of misbehaviour. Plans are in place to introduce key workers to strengthen preventative work and liaison with parents and carers. Attendance has improved and is higher in 2012 than in 2011. This is due to more rigorous monitoring of a wider range of pupils and more proactive work with parents and carers. More rigorous action to tackle the few cases of persistent absence has commenced but this has not so far resulted in more regular attendance by these pupils. Punctuality has improved. The increased use of texting and phone calls has provided prompt reminders to parents and carers as well as pupils to attend and be punctual.

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

- improve behaviour and safety – satisfactory

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Leaders and managers have brought about some improvement in achievement, teaching and behaviour. Since the appointment of the executive headteacher, the rate of improvement has begun to increase. She has a clear vision and strategy for improvement based on an accurate evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the school. She has recently and quickly formed an effective working relationship with the acting headteacher. Since the previous inspection, a programme of lesson observation has been introduced which has led to personal development plans for all teachers. Inadequate teaching has been identified and some improvements have been made through mentoring, coaching and support. Performance management arrangements were weak and are in the process of becoming more formalised. Training and development have improved the teaching of phonics and guided reading. The progress of pupils has been tracked but the use and analysis of assessment data by teaching staff have been limited. Plans are in place for staff training in the use of assessment to analyse trends in performance. The leaders of literacy



and numeracy, the assistant headteacher and acting headteacher have developed a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and have identified clear priorities for improvement. Actions have begun to be implemented and have started to have an impact. The coordination of other subjects remains undeveloped.

A range of new appointments has strengthened the expertise of the governing body. The governing body has embraced the partnership with the neighbouring academy and a new structure has been put in place to improve governors' monitoring and evaluation of school improvement. The vice-chair of the governing body attends and contributes to the weekly meeting of the senior leadership team and is well informed of developments, especially in relation to attendance. The school has acted effectively to meet the health and safety and safeguarding requirements identified at the previous inspection.

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

- improve leadership and management – satisfactory

External support

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose. The local authority has effectively negotiated and commissioned the additional support provided by the executive headteacher, the partner academy and its governing body. It has provided helpful advice and support for improving the provision for inclusion and special educational needs. The literacy training that it brokered has had a positive impact on teaching and learning. The local authority has also contributed positively to the monitoring and evaluation of school improvement. The executive headteacher from the local academy has provided clear direction, timely and expert support for school leaders and practical strategies for improvement which have recently begun to accelerate the pace of improvement.

