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4 October 2012

Mrs J Dunlop
Executive Headteacher
Wildmoor Heath School
Lower Broadmoor Road
Crowthorne
RG45 7HD

Dear Mrs Dunlop

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Wildmoor Heath School

Following my visit with Deirdre Crutchley, Additional Inspector, to your school on 2–3 October 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 December 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 – good

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 Bracknell Forest.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria
Her Majesty’s Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise attainment, particularly in mathematics, and accelerate the progress that pupils make, especially boys and the more able, so they achieve well by:
 - ensuring every teacher has consistently high expectations of all pupils
 - providing a well-balanced curriculum which excites pupils and builds their skills and knowledge progressively in all subjects, especially mathematics
 - ensuring teachers' assessments are accurate and reliably identify pupils who need additional support
 - tracking pupils' progress year on year to provide a clear picture of their achievement as they move through the school
 - using the information robustly to secure consistently high quality provision in all year groups and subjects.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - developing teachers' understanding of what the very best teaching and learning are like
 - providing pupils with varied, challenging activities in lessons that are interesting and carefully matched to their different abilities
 - maintaining a brisk pace by assessing how well pupils are learning throughout a lesson and moving them on to the next steps more quickly, particularly more-able pupils
 - providing opportunities for pupils to develop and explain their ideas
 - implementing a whole-school approach to marking which identifies clearly what pupils have done well and how they can improve further.

- Increase the capacity for sustained improvement and strengthen leadership at all levels by:
 - ensuring all staff understand their roles and responsibilities and have the skills, knowledge and support to fulfil them effectively
 - addressing any underperformance swiftly and holding all staff to account robustly for the impact of their work
 - developing the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work by the governing body so that it is able to provide sufficient challenge and support to school leaders
 - ensuring plans for improvement include quantifiable targets, specific measures of success and milestone points at which to evaluate progress.

Special measures: monitoring of Wildmoor Heath School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 2-3 October 2012

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, the Chair and a representative of the Governing Body, a group of parents, pupils and a representative from the local authority. In addition, inspectors had informal conversations with pupils in classes and around the school.

Context

There have been considerable changes to staffing, since the previous monitoring inspection. A restructure has taken place with some newly defined roles and responsibilities. A new executive headteacher has been appointed. The acting deputy headteacher has been appointed as the substantive deputy headteacher and three new teachers have been recruited to work at the school.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Outcomes at the end of the Reception Year in 2012 were lower than those attained in 2011. However, refinements to assessment practice have resulted in more rigorous and accurate tracking which indicates children's progress is strong currently. Inspection and school data indicate an improvement in attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, although it achieved above the national average for writing, no pupils achieved the higher levels in writing in 2012 and girls continue to outperform the boys. This is as a result of weaknesses in teaching and instability in staffing in the past year. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is now above the national average. The 2012 unvalidated national test data indicate significant improvements in the English and mathematics results. The school's focus on mathematics has been beneficial, although writing throughout the school remains a relatively weaker area. The school correctly continues to have the development of writing as a priority in its Raising Attainment plan.

Currently, the rate of pupils' progress is increasing because of improvements to teaching, notably in upper Key Stage 2. School tracking data indicate that pupils in Key Stage 1 are mostly making satisfactory progress. In lessons, pupils are mostly attentive and take a keen interest in how they are progressing. Inspectors observed pupils in Year 5 applying themselves well to problem solving activity that was suitably matched to their prior attainment.

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

- Raise attainment, particularly in mathematics, and accelerate the progress that pupils make, especially boys and the more able, so they achieve well – satisfactory

The quality of teaching

The overall quality of teaching and learning is improving well. However, senior leaders are aware that some variability remains. The proportion of teaching that demonstrates good features is increasing and, consequently, the rate of progress made by pupils is improving. Where the teaching is well-informed and provides pupils with opportunities to respond, pupils make good progress because they are sufficiently challenged to develop and articulate their views in a confident manner. However, some lessons are too teacher led and directed, encouraging too passive a response from the pupils. The pace of learning is slow for a number of reasons. There is still too much adult direction and not enough time for pupils to learn actively. Additionally, where teaching requires improvement, resources are not well matched to the needs of pupils and teachers do not readily adapt tasks if pupils do not respond as expected.

The best marking seen in books informs pupils what they have done well but also gives them an opportunity at the beginning of each lesson to respond to the comments raised by teachers and to ask for any clarifications. However, this is not a consistent feature of marking across all subjects and year groups. Support from other adults is usually clearly defined and purposeful. They provide sensitive but firm support for those pupils who sometimes find it difficult to engage purposefully with their learning. This means that, in most lessons, disruption to the learning of others is minimised. Senior leaders know that the key to improving teaching overall is to ensure consistencies by continuing to support individuals with the weaker aspects of their performance.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better – satisfactory

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Relationships between pupils and staff in the school remain strong. Pupils are friendly, confident and articulate and speak happily about the recent improvements in the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently positive and there is a positive ethos in the school. They enjoy lessons and most work engagingly and participate well in paired or group discussion and are keen to take part in question and answer sessions and feedback. Consequently attendance is high.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The new executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher have a clear and realistic understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Despite the many recent staff changes, senior leaders have used their substantial expertise to create a culture of continuous improvement and to encourage staff to take a lead in trying

new ways of doing things to improve the school. Systems are working well because of good teamwork and communication. The raised expectations in teaching and learning mean that all teachers are accountable for the progress that pupils make. Senior staff have ensured that professional development is linked to the school's priorities and the needs of each member of staff. This has led to the middle managers developing their subject knowledge and being better equipped to manage their duties and start to share the benefits of their professional development widely. For example, the numeracy and Early Years Foundation Stage leaders have conducted thorough audits of their subjects and drawn up appropriate action plans to address the issues raised. They are well informed about adapting and using proven practices to accelerate pupils' progress. There is evidence that the governing body is beginning to challenge and evaluate the impact of actions taken by senior leaders. However, the governing body's influence in affecting change is not yet wholly evident. The governing body is drawing up plans to recruit a permanent headteacher who will take up post in January 2013.

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

- Increase the capacity for sustained improvement and strengthen leadership at all levels – good

External support

The local authority has continued to provide the school with a good deal of support that is well matched to needs, which has contributed to the improvements noted above. Local authority officers are involved in regular reviews of the school and hold an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses.