

PROTECT-INSPECTION



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Claire Turner
Headteacher
Stapleford Community Primary School
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Dear Mrs Turner

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Stapleford Community Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 17 October 2012 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils, governors, local authority representatives and the members of the leadership and special educational needs teams who gave their time to talk to me.

Recent changes to the school include the appointment of a new deputy headteacher and new literacy and mathematics subject leaders. The leadership of special educational needs and disabilities has been strengthened with an additional teacher working one day per week to support the special educational needs coordinator. Two classes are taught by job-sharing teachers. One newly qualified teacher started this term. A new Assistant Headteacher has been appointed to start in January.

As a result of the inspection on 6 March 2012, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

There has been some improvement in the rate of pupils' progress due to some better teaching. Pupils' progress continues to be too inconsistent between classes and between groups within classes. In the 2012 national tests, there was a mixed picture, showing broadly similar results overall to the previous year. There was some significant improvement in the proportion of pupils gaining Level 5 in English, which rose to over half the class. Attainment remains high and expected progress is above average in mathematics and very high in English.

The quality of teaching is improving but too few lessons are good. A high level of local authority support and visits to a nearby high-performing primary school are proving helpful. The school assesses that the quality of teaching is not yet good, although most teachers deliver lessons that are good at least some of the time. The main reason for lessons not being good is that the work is not planned well enough to meet the needs of the wide range of pupils' abilities in the class. The highly ambitious target set in the previous inspection report has not yet been met. The school has put in place appropriate structures and activities which are designed to meet the target but the impact has not been quick enough.

A key improvement in teaching has been providing engaging activities which involve all pupils in active learning and in designing learning which challenges them to move on from their starting points. Training has been provided for staff as a whole and for individuals. The impact of this training has been that staff have improved their skill at engaging the children in whole-class sessions and providing better activities for independent work. This is not yet consistent enough.

There has also been staff training on assessing progress in reading. The result of this is that teachers are monitoring children's reading in a more systematic manner so progress is tracked more rigorously. Marking has improved and pupils are clear about what they should do to improve their work. They are less clear about the National Curriculum level at which they are working.

There has been a major step up in the regularity and rigour of lesson observations. Regular observations of lessons are followed up by professional discussions about what went well in the lessons and how they can improve further. Joint observations between local authority advisers, consultants and the headteacher have ensured rigour and accuracy in the feedback. Joint planning sessions with the partner school, together with the appointment and promotion of recently trained teachers, have expanded the range of teaching approaches used.

Provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has been supported by a specialist teacher employed by the school. The adviser has worked with the outgoing coordinator for one day a week during the autumn term, pending the appointment of a new assistant headteacher who will take over this responsibility from January 2013. The school was unsuccessful in recruiting a suitable candidate for the post during the summer term of 2012.

The current team have reviewed the register of special educational needs, identifying areas of need and creating a more evaluative vision of how pupils can be challenged to catch up and make more rapid progress. Intervention programme plans have been created and made available to all class teachers. An efficient database and monitoring system has been created to track provision and outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and those entitled to the pupil premium. The impact of these developments has yet to be evaluated. The school has yet to

ensure that all class teachers are using the tracking data and provision mapping effectively and regularly throughout the year to ensure rapid and sustained progress for pupils. Pupils, and their parents, are not yet fully involved with the setting of targets in their individual education plans. They do not know and understand their targets nor participate in reviewing progress and levels of attainment. As a result of recent improvements, progress for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is improving, but is still not as rapid as it is for most pupils in the school.

Since the previous inspection there has been a renewed emphasis on improving behaviour. Examples were observed of teachers skilfully correcting pupils' behaviour by reference to the whole-school policy and the right of the rest of the class to have their learning uninterrupted. Sometimes, the enthusiasm of the teacher to move the lesson on misses identifying those pupils being distracted from their work. The new deputy headteacher is having a positive impact on the behaviour of older pupils.

The strategic leadership of the school has been strengthened. New subject leaders for literacy and numeracy demonstrate a good understanding of their role but they have not been in post long enough to show much impact. Governors have an astute understanding of the school's circumstances, together with views of various stakeholders such as teachers and parents. Relations with parents have improved because teachers are now spending more time with them before and after school. The school has used its pupil premium funding to both improve provision for special educational needs and to pay for activities such as musical instrument tuition designed to raise pupils' self-esteem. Robust action has been taken to deal with ineffective teaching. The headteacher now has a sharp and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Since the previous inspection, the local authority has not only set up an effective link with another school but deployed a teaching and learning adviser to the school for three days a week. Subject advisers and support for leadership are also provided. The local authority's statement of action was evaluated as 'fit for purpose'. The local authority has directed a lot of effective resources to supporting the school and it will need to consider carefully the extent to which it would be sensible to reduce this resource from January.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Lyons
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Strengthen strategic leadership at all levels by:
 - providing supportive guidance for all staff
 - evaluating more sharply the school's provision, so that best practice is recognised and celebrated, and weaknesses are identified and addressed
 - monitoring rigorously the impact of planned actions and interventions, and analysing the progress and participation of different groups of pupils
 - implementing effective procedures for monitoring the performance of staff, to target support and shape whole-school priorities for improvement.

- Improve teaching so that, by September 2012, most practice is good or outstanding by:
 - ensuring that learning always presents suitable levels of challenge for different groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
 - planning activities that actively engage all pupils
 - sharing the best practice in managing pupils' behaviour, promoting their independence and nurturing their positive engagement.