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22 November 2012

Ms Wendy Hick
Executive headteacher
Manorfield Primary School
Wyvis Street
Poplar
London
E14 6QD

Dear Ms Hick

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Manorfield Primary School

Following my visit with Ann Sydney, additional inspector, to your school on 20–21 November 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 February 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 – good.

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.

Yours sincerely

Carmen Rodney
Her Majesty’s Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics by:
 - providing frequent, good opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their skills in these two areas
 - supporting pupils' learning in mathematics by using practical resources when needed
 - ensuring that the curriculum promotes the acquisition of good basic literacy and numeracy skills for all groups of pupils.

- Take urgent action to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all teaching is satisfactory or better and a substantial proportion is good by:
 - ensuring teachers have high expectations of how hard pupils should work in lessons
 - matching activities to the needs of individual pupils so that all are challenged well, particularly the most able
 - ensuring marking is regular and frequent and gives clear guidance to pupils about how to improve
 - focusing sharply on improving pupils' reading in Year 3, and giving better support to those whose attainment was low at the end of Year 2, providing pupils with clear targets for their next steps in learning.

- Take swift steps to improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - providing a clear structure of leadership for senior and middle leaders, with clear roles and responsibilities
 - implementing a rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluation of teaching that is followed up with high quality support for all staff.

Special measures: monitoring of Manorfield Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 20–21 November 2012

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and the parents' forum.

Context

There have been few changes in staffing since the previous monitoring inspection in June 2012. The interim headteacher has been appointed to the substantive post and will become full-time in January 2013. Three long-term supply teachers were appointed in September. The school is moving to a three-form entry, and at the start of the new school year in September the number of pupils on roll increased when a new form was added to Year 4.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Pupils' attainment in the 2012 national tests in English and mathematics improved significantly in both key stages. Results in 2012 were the best in five years at the end of Year 2, while in Year 6, pupils' performance was much better than the previous year's. Nevertheless, the upward trend of improvement in pupils' attainment masks the significantly lower results in reading. In contrast, writing, previously the weaker aspect in English, was broadly average, as was mathematics. Although the majority of pupils reached the standard expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, most of the more able did not reach the higher levels.

The school exceeded the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Progress was much better than the previous year and pupils made the progress expected for their age group. The attainment gap has narrowed significantly and pupils eligible for the pupil premium made significantly faster progress than their peers when compared with the school's average and the national average. In comparison, pupils with additional learning needs, particularly those with a statement of special educational needs, and mostly of White British heritage, made slower progress than other groups. The school has responded very quickly to analysing the results and commissioning case studies on different groups of pupils to identify the factors affecting their progress. Findings have been used well to match specific literacy and numeracy support to their needs and monitor the impact of on their progress.

Pupils' achievement has improved from the previously low base since the section 5 inspection, primarily because expectations of what they can achieve are higher and

support is carefully targeted to the needs of individuals and groups. For example, a good range of initiatives to improve reading and comprehension skills have been developed. Teachers have received specialist training to develop pupils' mathematical skills, their reading and interpretation of different types of texts to accelerate their progress. Extra reading sessions and the use of talk to approach writing, catch-up and booster sessions are also contributing to pupils making better progress. There is more emphasis on developing basic cross-curricular links, particularly in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Assessment information to monitor pupils' progress is an emerging strength.

Actions to improve reading, communication skills – oral and written – and mathematics were evident in the outstanding lessons seen in Year 6. In the English lesson seen, pupils made exceptionally good progress in their response to Tennyson's use of language in *The Lady of Shalott*. Similarly, progress was outstanding in the mathematics lesson on probability because expectations were high and pupils rose to the challenge as learning took them beyond numeracy.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage made progress in line with that expected for their age group, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development, and better progress in physical development. However, children's progress in communication, language and literacy was less than that found nationally. As a result, there is effective early help to develop basic literacy skills, particularly in relation to pupils developing a good grounding in phonic skills (the sound letters make). Pupils have not all mastered the skills to distinguish the correct sounds of letters and this affects their ability to spell accurately as they move up the school.

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

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics – satisfactory.

The quality of teaching

Much has been done since the last monitoring inspection to consolidate the work on improving the quality of teaching. Consequently, the majority of teaching is effective and the school is on track to meet its target. Improvements are proving effective because teachers are demanding more from pupils; roles and responsibilities of all leaders have been spelt out and individual teachers, particularly subject leaders, have fully grasped their responsibility to accelerate pupils' progress. Better line management systems have increased accountability and planning to meet the learning needs of groups and individuals. Targeted training to improve subject knowledge in literacy and mathematics is enabling teachers and teaching assistants to provide work that is more challenging for pupils. Most of all, teachers have a better understanding of school improvement and what constitutes good practice.

Where teaching was outstanding, highly knowledgeable teachers inspired pupils in a classroom environment that compelled them to enjoy their learning and work at full stretch. In the good lessons seen, teaching assistants played a key role in helping pupils with additional learning needs to make good progress by explaining, questioning, demonstrating and enabling them to do the work. Good subject knowledge, effective questioning, very good behaviour management combined with well-established routines and the attention to developing pupils' communication skills contributed to pupils making good progress. In the lessons requiring improvement, challenge and pace were not sustained; there were too few opportunities to extend pupils' views and their vocabulary; occasionally the purpose of the lesson lacked clarity and there was insufficient attention to showing pupils how to move on.

The quality of marking is much improved. It is detailed; there is meaningful dialogue between pupils and their teacher and there is a clear running commentary. There is however, insufficient attention given to presentation skills, handwriting and spelling mistakes. Not all pupils are fully aware of their target level.

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

- Take urgent action to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all teaching is satisfactory or better and a substantial proportion is good – good.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and were occasionally outstanding during the monitoring inspection. Pupils readily engage in their learning and are very keen to apply taught skills and explore new ideas individually in pairs or groups. There is a high level of cooperation with their teacher and each other in lessons, as they follow well-established routines very well. Pupils thrive on the positive relationships with each other, which contributes to good teamwork.

Attendance is currently above average for primary schools. This further improvement is linked to the explicit expectations about meeting attendance targets. Good attendance is rewarded and parents know the consequences if pupils are absent for ten days or more. There have been no exclusions since the start of the new school year. Parents spoken to during the inspection confirmed their children's views about safety. They said that their children are 'very safe and secure in the school'.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

A strengthened and re-organised senior leadership team is driving school improvement well. The roles and responsibility of each senior and subject leader have been redefined and there is a clear focus on improving all aspects of provision, in particular teaching and learning. There is effective use of personal action plans. Subject coordinators feel valued and supported and they commented on how much

they appreciate the clear line management system. Effective communication, transparency and increased accountability plans are contributing to the much-improved use of data to monitor pupils' attainment and progress.

The school has a good understanding of how well it is doing. The much-improved monitoring of teaching and tracking of pupils' progress involves subject coordinators analysing assessment data and giving feedback to staff and the governing body. This is enabling them to find out how well individual and groups of pupils are doing. For instance, reports on identified groups of pupils such as White British pupils are commissioned and findings are acted on. Subject leaders are more sure-footed but at this stage, the school acknowledges that not all of them are fully involved in lesson observations. The school also recognises that training and development are required to improve the subject knowledge of a few staff in subjects such as science, history and geography.

Robust systems for monitoring behaviour and all forms of bullying are in place. The curriculum review has included well-selected materials to develop reading, writing and mathematics. The thematic approach is contributing to the school developing a range of cross-curricular links to drive progress.

The parents' forum said that the headteacher had breathed 'new life' into the school and are very positive about the direction in which it is moving. Parents indicated that there is 'continuity in learning' because the school sets work during the holidays. They like the homework club and opportunities available to work with teachers, which they say is helping them to make a difference to their children's learning.

The governing body is plain-speaking when challenging the school. Members seek to know how well pupils are performing and have used their expertise and training on assessment data and school improvement well and to do observations and seek evidence to support the school's assertions. They are intent on increasing the school's capacity quickly and have successfully done so through the increased accountability, which begins with them, through the senior leaders, middle leaders and other staff. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are very clear about sustaining improvement and the next steps.

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

- Take swift steps to improve the quality of leadership and management – good.

External support

Effective support from the local authority's consultants and lead adviser has enabled the school to meet most of the targets identified in the action plan in relation to the areas for improvement. The pace of improvement has therefore been rapid to the

extent that the local authority has reduced the level of intervention as it puts in place its exit strategy.