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30 November 2012

Mr David McLeod  
The Headteacher  
Stanhope Primary School  
Mansell Road  
Greenford  
UB6 9EG

Dear Mr McLeod

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Stanhope Primary School**

Following my visit with Olson Davis, Additional Inspector, to your school on 28 and 29 November 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you and your staff gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the governors and pupils who met with us during the inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in May 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.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published 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 Ealing.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Knowles  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Introduce a training programme immediately to ensure all teaching is at least good or better by:
  - using assessment information more effectively to ensure teaching carefully guides the next steps in learning for all pupils, especially in mathematics
  - identifying clearly how the learning needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are to be met in lessons
  - using new technology and other resources more effectively to support and extend the pupils' learning across the full range of subjects
  - improving marking so it provides more effective feedback on the steps pupils need to take to meet their targets
  - deploying teaching assistants so that they make an effective contribution to raising pupils' achievement.
- Improve pupils' behaviour in lessons by:
  - ensuring that teachers achieve a better balance between how much they talk and the time allowed for pupils to be actively engaged in learning
  - ensuring teachers manage behaviour consistently and effectively.
- Introduce a programme to raise achievement in English which:
  - ensures that pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language are provided with sufficient opportunities to practise speaking in order to improve their level of fluency
  - focuses the teaching of phonics more sharply on the next steps in each pupil's learning, and by organising groups so that they include pupils of similar levels of attainment
  - increase the impact of guided reading sessions and ensure that pupils read to an adult in school regularly and frequently.
- Improve provision and outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - ensuring that there is a coherent and systematic plan to promote all areas of learning
  - making more effective use of the outdoor environment so that children's outdoor activities are linked more closely to their learning in the classroom ensuring that the Nursery and Reception work together more closely for the good of all children's development.
- Improve the school's leadership capacity and impact by:
  - ensuring that all leaders have the skills to drive forward improvements in their areas, particularly in improving the quality of teaching
  - developing the role of the governing body so that it is able to hold the school to account
  - monitoring the performance of different groups of pupils so that any emerging gaps can be responded to quickly.

## **Report on the first monitoring inspection on 28 and 29 November 2012**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors visited 21 lessons or part lessons. Most were observed jointly with the headteacher or acting deputy headteachers. Meetings were held with a group of parents, two members of the governing body, school staff, a representative from the local authority and with pupils. Inspectors looked at a range of the school's documentation, teachers' planning and pupils' workbooks.

### **Context**

There have been significant changes to the staffing of the school since the previous inspection. Six teachers have left the school. Due to late resignations, several of these vacant posts have been filled with temporary staff. A new staffing structure was introduced from September, with a senior leadership team of two deputy headteachers and three class-based assistant headteachers. Temporary appointments have been made to all these posts until April 2013.

An interim Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed by the local authority. She has led the reconstitution of the Governing Body. Several new governors have been recruited.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Across the school, attainment in English is rising. The teaching of reading now has a higher profile in the school, with daily group reading sessions for older pupils and daily teaching of letter sounds (phonics) for younger pupils. Teachers have a better understanding how knowledge of letters and sounds builds over time and plan phonics lessons that meet pupils' needs. Pupils are taught phonics in ability groups in Years 1 and 2. A 'catch-up' reading programme has enabled older pupils who had fallen behind in reading to make accelerated progress. School leaders have correctly identified that some teachers are still not confident enough in managing group reading lessons and have arranged for these staff to have support to develop their skills.

Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage now work together to plan a wide range of activities for children in the Nursery and Reception classes that cover all the required areas of learning. They make better use of the outside areas to extend classroom learning. All classrooms are bright and engaging, although some are still rather cluttered making it difficult for children to access resources easily. The quality of role-play areas is variable. Some, such as the well-planned 'police station' and 'Three Bears' house' in the Nursery promote confident speaking and storytelling for all children, including those who are at an early stage of learning English. The impending improvement to the Reception and Nursery outside areas will enable staff to plan more readily for outside activities and learning.

A new policy for teaching calculation skills has been introduced and a recent check of pupils' books showed that teachers are following the guidance closely. Over the last year, pupils in most classes made expected progress in mathematics.

### **The quality of teaching**

Although teaching is still not consistently good, many lessons seen during the monitoring inspection had positive aspects. Most notably, the pace of learning in lessons is now generally brisk and teachers plan activities that are better matched to pupils' needs in English and mathematics. Teaching assistants are more effectively used in lessons. Most classrooms have bright displays that support pupils' learning. Teachers' marking and written feedback usually give pupils good guidance on what they need to do to improve, especially in Key Stage 2. In the best lessons, teachers build on pupils' previous learning and use effective questions to develop understanding. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson on fractions, the teacher started the lesson with a quick revision of previous learning and then introduced a new concept. She questioned pupils closely to gauge the level of their understanding and corrected any misconceptions very carefully so that pupils' confidence was not undermined. By the end of the lesson, every pupil had understood the new concept and all had made good progress.

Inspectors saw teachers and pupils using new technology such as interactive whiteboards and digital cameras to support learning. At present, teachers are less confident with using the newly-installed visualisers in lessons (a type of camera that allows the teacher to project pupils' work on to a large screen display) to help enliven pupils' learning further.

There is a more consistent approach to planning across the school. All teachers use the same planning grid and teachers in the same year group plan lessons together to ensure that every class covers the same area of learning. However, planning does not always identify how the learning needs of vulnerable groups, such as the pupils at an early stage of learning English or those with special educational needs or disabilities, will be met. Most teachers do not use the information they gain from marking pupils' work and observing learning to adapt their lesson plans during the week.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour in lessons has improved. Pupils have more positive attitudes to their work. They say that teachers talk for less time in lessons and they allow more time for pupils to discuss their ideas with each other. In the lessons seen during the inspection, there was no poor behaviour or disruption to learning. Teachers managed behaviour consistently and made expectations clear.

Around the school, teachers ensure that they notice good behaviour and praise pupils for walking sensibly and holding doors open for others. Pupils report that behaviour outside on the playground is better and incidents of bullying have reduced

and are now uncommon. Pupils are eager to come to school and this is reflected in higher attendance.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

The headteacher has a positive attitude and a clear vision for the school. He has the full confidence of parents, pupils and staff and morale in the school is good. Teachers say that the pace of change is fast and expectations are high, but success is recognised and they are well supported.

The new senior staffing structure of two deputy headteachers and three class-based assistant headteachers adds strength and depth to the leadership team in the school and its capacity to steer improvement. The headteacher and governing body have not made permanent appointments to any of these roles, as yet, but all the current postholders are clear about their responsibilities and have risen to the challenge of their new interim positions. The two acting deputy headteachers, in particular, have already made a strong contribution to improving the school and are supporting the less experienced assistant headteachers to develop their skills in leading and managing the work of a team of teachers. Plans are in place to develop the next level of middle leaders, such as subject leaders and the manager of provision for pupils at an early stage of learning English, but this work is at an early stage.

The headteacher and other senior staff visit classes regularly to check on the quality of teaching. They also review teachers' planning, look at work in pupils' books and talk to pupils about their learning in lessons. They use the information gained from these checks to gain an overview of each teacher's strengths and weaknesses and provide teachers with clear targets for improvement. They also ensure that teachers receive the support they need to improve their practice and develop their skills. This is leading to steady improvement in the quality of teaching.

There is now a rigorous process in place to ensure that pupils do not underachieve. Teachers check the progress that their pupils make each term and meet formally with the headteacher and acting deputy headteachers to discuss any pupils who may be in danger of falling behind. They agree the actions teachers will take to tackle this and arrange additional support for pupils, if necessary. There are plans to increase the frequency of these pupil progress meetings next term.

The role of the governing body has been developed and it is increasingly able to hold school leaders to account. The headteacher provides governors with clear and accurate assessments of the school's progress towards the removal of special measures. Minutes of meetings of the governing body show that governors ask more challenging questions about the school's work. Governors are making more visits to the school. The very experienced and knowledgeable interim Chair of the Governing Body has ensured that the skills of different governors are used effectively. This has ensured that the school's finances are managed correctly and that the buildings are properly maintained.

## **External support**

The local authority statement of action has been evaluated and is fit for purpose. The plan provides for a support package from a local outstanding school. This partnership is highly valued by teachers and the headteacher and has been very effective in assisting the school to accelerate teachers' professional development. The local authority arranged the appointment of the interim Chair of the Governing Body. This has led to a rapid improvement in the governance of the school. The Senior Education Professional allocated to the school works closely with the headteacher to ensure that all support is well targeted and effective.

The local authority has provided specialist support for staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This has led to dramatic improvements to the way teachers organise learning in their classrooms. Support to improve teachers' planning and ensure that the outdoor areas develop children's learning is on going.