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30 January 2013

Mr M Shirley
Headteacher
Boyton Community Primary School
Boyton
Launceston
PL15 9RJ

Dear Mr Shirley

Special measures monitoring inspection of Boyton Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 29 January 2013, 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 gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in April 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 Cornwall.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- As a matter of urgency, the local authority, together with the governing body, should improve the leadership and management of the school and raise the morale of staff by:
 - taking steps to bring stability at senior leadership level
 - providing clear strategic direction for the school's work
 - ensuring that essential systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are established
 - ensuring self-evaluation is accurate, so that weaknesses are identified effectively
 - drawing up and implementing a clear plan of action to address weaknesses.

- Raise attainment and improve progress, especially in mathematics in Key Stage 2, through:
 - ensuring that the work pupils are expected to complete is well matched to their different abilities and is sufficiently challenging
 - providing activities that are interesting and engaging
 - raising expectations of how pupils will present their work
 - ensuring that pupils know how well they are making progress
 - ensuring that teachers' marking is accurate and always helps pupils to know what to do to improve their work.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 29 January 2013

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, assistant headteacher, teachers, teaching assistants, the school administrator, parent representatives and the Chair of Governors. The inspector also spoke informally with pupils at lunchtime and during lessons. A representative from the local authority attended the feedback meeting at the end of the day.

Context

The governing body and senior leaders are currently working closely with the local authority to secure the permanent leadership of the school beyond July 2013.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Senior leaders have introduced a clear system to monitor and evaluate the school's work and in particular check the progress of pupils' learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Although numbers within the school are very small for each year group, pupils' progress information clearly identifies their age-related targets. Leaders can also check on those pupils who are underachieving or in danger of not making the expected progress. These pupils are provided with additional support and their progress is reviewed each half-term. This information is now being shared regularly with governors in order for them to keep a close eye on pupils' achievements overall.

The information gathered by senior leaders clearly shows there is a legacy of underachievement evident in the current levels of work for pupils in Key Stage 2. However, the current Year 6 pupils are on track to meet age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics by summer 2013. Also, the gaps are beginning to close in other year groups too as more pupils benefit from more consistent good teaching. For example, in the Key Stage 2 class, the inspector saw pupils practising using powerful adjectives in developing their writing skills and showed a secure understanding of the use of rhetorical questioning. The class teacher used her secure subject knowledge to check on pupils' learning and question pupils carefully in order to check their understanding.

The quality of teaching

Information provided by senior leaders on pupils' progress is now being used appropriately by teachers to provide activities that are interesting and engaging for all pupils. This information has raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can do.

Teachers' marking is regularly carried out and focused on helping pupils to know what to do to improve their work. Although there is a wide range of ages and abilities in both of the classes, teachers ensure that learning activities are mostly well matched to the needs of pupils. For example, the youngest pupils were making very good progress in developing their language and writing skills through stimulating activities all based around the story of *The Three Little Pigs*. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and are experienced and well trained. They are an integral part of classroom provision for pupils of all abilities. Where additional expertise is required for pupils who are disabled or with special educational needs, the school works closely with other agencies and partners. However, opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning – especially when pupils are working in small groups – or to choose tasks that provide them with greater challenge are sometimes overlooked.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The inspector met with pupils at lunchtime and spoke with other pupils in classes about their learning and standards of behaviour within the school. This was a much more positive response than at the time of the previous visit. Pupils say they now enjoy school and mentioned in particular a recent visit many of them made to Charmouth with pupils from their partner school. Pupils were welcoming and keen to talk. They said behaviour in and around the school is now nearly always good and they were able to clearly explain the sanctions used by the school when pupils do misbehave. Pupils say they feel safe in school and should they have a worry or concern they would speak to their teachers.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Morale amongst the staff within the school is much improved. All adults agree that senior leaders have developed an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and have established a clear plan of action to address weaknesses and focused on school improvement. Through improved communication channels, teachers and support staff are able to provide appropriately for the learning needs of pupils.

The governing body is becoming better informed about the work of the school through regular reports from senior leaders. Governors are beginning to work closely with teachers in checking on the progress pupils are making. They acknowledge the need for further training in order to fulfil their wide range of duties. Overall, governors are now able to hold the school more effectively to account.

Parents who spoke with the inspector all agreed that 'the school has changed beyond recognition, for the better'. They gave examples of their children enjoying school more and said that classrooms look different because 'they contained displays that fired pupils' imagination to learn'. Parents said they were pleased with the progress their children were making in lessons because of the increased workload given to pupils. For example, homework is set regularly now which takes thought

and application to complete. Parents also appreciate the supportive comments teachers write when regularly marking their children's work.

Although parents say communication through a weekly newsletter is appreciated, they are concerned about the long-term future of the school. They would appreciate more regular information about what is to happen to the permanent leadership of the school after July 2013.

External support

The local authority statement of action was found to be not fit for purpose when it was evaluated by Her Majesty's Inspector in August 2012 and again in September 2012. Since that time, a number of revisions have been made to this document. These changes have now been incorporated into the revised statement of action and the school's own improvement plan. The local authority continues to work closely with the governing body to resolve the issues surrounding the substantive leadership of the school.