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7 March 2013

Mr D McLeod
Stanhope Primary School
Mansell Road
Greenford
UB6 9EG

Dear Mr McLeod

Special measures monitoring inspection of Stanhope Primary School

Following my visit with Gill Bosschaert, Additional Inspector, to your school on 5 to 6 March 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 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 should 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 the London Borough of 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 second monitoring inspection on 5–6 March 2013

Evidence

Inspectors visited 21 lessons. Several lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or with the deputy headteachers. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and a new parent governor. An inspector also met a group of pupils, school staff, a group of parents and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors looked at documents, teachers' planning and pupils' workbooks.

Context

The two acting deputy headteachers have been appointed to permanent positions. The staffing structure has been modified to include an additional assistant headteacher post. Two permanent appointments have been made to these roles from existing staff. The remaining two posts have been advertised externally and the interviews will take place later in March. Vacancies for the key subject leadership roles in English and mathematics are being advertised internally. There are still a number of temporary teachers covering classes pending the appointment of the assistant headteachers and subject leaders.

There have been significant changes to the membership of the governing body. The Chair of the Governing Body who was previously appointed in an interim role, has now agreed to take up a four-year term of office.

Significant building alterations to improve provision for outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage have been approved. The work is scheduled to take place over the summer.

Achievement of pupils at the school

The structured teaching of letter sounds (phonics) is now embedded. The school's records of pupils' progress show that most children in Reception and Year 1 are developing the necessary skills to sound out words for reading and blend sounds to write. Elsewhere in the school, most teachers confidently manage group reading sessions and ensure that activities in these lessons enable pupils to practise their reading skills effectively.

Progress in English and mathematics is improving in some year groups. Visits to lessons and work in pupils' books confirm that the majority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making at least the expected progress. However, pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 still make less progress than they should. School leaders have correctly identified that a few teachers are still not able to make accurate judgements about the standards reached by pupils. The headteacher has made good use of the support from the

partner school to tackle this quickly and he is confident that the situation will improve.

Teachers' planning now identifies how the learning needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs will be met in lessons. Teachers have recently been trained to plan activities in lessons that enable pupils who are learning English as an additional language to improve their level of fluency. It is too early to see the impact of this work. The school's tracking information shows progress for both these groups of pupils is variable between classes and between subjects.

Children in the Reception and Nursery classes now have more opportunities to write and their writing is displayed prominently. For example, in one Reception class children have been learning about insects and bugs. The teacher has set up a table with photographs and books on display and the children have written captions and labels to go with them. The assistant headteacher who leads the work of staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage has set up a new system to track children's progress across all the areas for learning each half term. This is still being trialled. At present, some teachers do not collect or record enough evidence to support their judgements.

The quality of teaching

School leaders acknowledge that improvements in the quality of teaching are uneven. This was confirmed by visits made to lessons during this inspection. In the most effective lessons seen, time was used well and teachers planned a range of activities to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Energetic teaching and high expectations led to pupils making good progress. The teachers used very clear demonstrations to identify what pupils should aim to achieve. Practical tasks were used effectively to consolidate skills. Teachers used a good balance of whole-class teaching and group work to encourage independent learning and ensured that pupils understood how well they had achieved. Teaching assistants were used very well to work alongside pupils throughout all parts of the lesson. This helped those requiring additional support to make similar progress to their classmates.

In contrast, some teaching did not make enough demands of pupils. Opportunities to involve pupils in their learning were missed. The pace was slower and expectations were not explicitly stated. Tasks were not pitched at appropriate levels to enable all pupils to make good progress in lessons. Teaching assistants were, at times, not used effectively to provide the maximum support possible. Learning was compromised because resources were not used well.

The quality of marking is variable. Most teachers use the 'wow' and 'now' comments, particularly when marking pupils' writing books. They acknowledge success and provide helpful guidance to pupils on what they need to improve. Some teachers pose additional questions or ask pupils to respond to their comments, but do not

check to see that this is done. There is not a consistent approach to correcting weaknesses in letter formation and basic spelling.

Work to develop the use of new technology is continuing. The school has successfully introduced the use of on-line learning platforms that pupils can access from home. Parents report that their children are greatly enjoying this way of working.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour seen in and around the school during this inspection was generally good. Pupils move around the school sensibly and are consistently courteous to adults. They readily stand aside in corridors and hold doors open for others to come through.

In lessons, the quality of behaviour is linked closely to the quality of teaching. Where the teaching is good, pupils are engaged in their learning and work with sustained concentration. Observations of lessons during the monitoring visit showed that pupils in some classes become disengaged and achieve little when the work set for them is not well matched to their needs.

Attendance dipped in the autumn due to an outbreak of a highly infectious stomach bug, but has recovered this term. More pupils are attending school regularly and the proportion of pupils with attendance of 98 per cent or better has risen significantly.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The systems and practices that were introduced in the autumn term have become embedded and are beginning to have a positive impact. The electronic system to track the progress of all pupils works efficiently and provides detailed information about the progress of individuals, classes and groups. The headteacher and the two deputy headteachers make good use of this information to analyse improvements and adjust provision. Meetings to discuss pupils' progress are now held every six weeks. This ensures that any underachievement is spotted and dealt with quickly.

The deputy headteachers have developed their skills quickly and now have the expertise to support the headteacher very effectively. However, the senior leadership team is still not at full strength, key subject leadership posts have not yet been filled and some classes are still being taught by temporary teachers. Although senior leaders have continued to focus clearly on improving the school, they have been at full stretch. For example, one of the deputy headteachers has had to cover the role of assistant headteacher in lower Key Stage 2 as well as taking the lead on curriculum and standards.

Close scrutiny of all aspects of teachers' work has continued. Teachers say that they understand what they need to do to improve, but some say they would like more help. School leaders have taken steps to ensure that all teachers have the opportunity to see models of good and outstanding teaching. Good practice is being shared internally and arrangements have been made for teachers to visit the partner school to see good and outstanding practice later this term. More intensive, tailored support is being planned for those teachers who need it.

The governing body has been strengthened further by the appointment of several new members. These governors provide specialist knowledge and experience in a variety of fields, such as finance and data analysis. The new governors have been trained quickly. They have a clear understanding of their roles and are keen to be fully involved. The governing body maintains a clear focus on supporting and challenging the headteacher to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching. To improve efficiency, some functions of the governing body, such as financial management have been delegated to committees.

External support

The headteacher has made very good use of the on-going support from the partner school. This has helped groups of teachers to develop their skills in planning and delivering lessons. A consultant from the local authority has supported the teachers who are leading the development of provision for pupils learning English as an additional language to draw up a coherent plan of action. Further support is planned in the coming months.

Officers from the local authority visit the school regularly to observe lessons and review pupils' progress. These visits have created additional pressure for the teaching staff and are unnecessary. School leaders have shown that they are able to provide detailed, accurate information about the quality of teaching in the school.