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7 March 2013

Mrs C Wapshare
Acting Headteacher
Beechview School
Guinions Road
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP13 7NT

Dear Mrs Wapshare

Special measures monitoring inspection of Beechview School

Following my visit to your school on Wednesday 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 recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in November 2012.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the acting headteacher, two members of the governing body including the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and the school's consultant headteacher commissioned by the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement action plans were evaluated.

Context

Since the inspection in November 2012, the headteacher has been on long-term absence. Staffing has been unsettled and the school has not operated with a full and consistent complement of substantive teaching staff or senior leaders. The local authority has applied to the Department for Education to set up an Interim Executive Board.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Personnel matters and some lack of continuity in senior leadership posts have hindered progress of school improvement but the acting headteacher is now providing clear drive and determination to press on with the necessary changes. The acting headteacher, although well supported by a consultant headteacher, carries a significant burden of tasks and does not yet have a well-established in-school leadership team to whom she can readily devolve responsibilities.

Action plans address all the areas for improvement arising from the last inspection. Key responsibilities are clear both at school and local authority level. A few activities lack tight timescales and key milestones are not as obvious as they could be to aid clarity for all staff and to help measure how well the school is doing. The acting headteacher has correctly maintained some flexibility in the action plans to meet the demands of changing priorities, for example improving the provision for pupils with special educational needs. There has been a strong focus on tackling poor behaviour and raising the quality of teaching and there are some signs of improvement in these areas.

The local authority has provided effective strategic support on some complex staffing matters and has kept a very close eye on how well the school is improving. It has provided specialist support, for example to develop leaders' skills in lesson observations and improve behaviour management and this is contributing effectively to raising the quality of day-to-day provision for pupils. The governing body has raised its awareness about what needs to be done to improve the school and is checking the progress of the action plans, but there is some uncertainty about its future role while waiting to see if there is approval to set up the Interim Executive Board.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's action plan is fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, and the Director of Children's Services for Buckinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Towl

Her Majesty's Inspector