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14 March 2013

Mrs Ros Munro  
Executive Headteacher  
Clarendon Road Community Primary School  
Clarendon Road  
Eccles  
Manchester  
M30 9BJ

Dear Mrs Munro

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Clarendon Road Community Primary School**

Following my visit with David Thompson, Additional Inspector, to your school on 12 and 13 March, 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 September 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 Interim Executive Board and the Strategic Director for Children's Services for Salford.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Guy  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September 2012:**

- Raise achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - ensuring teachers have sufficiently high expectations of all pupils
  - making sure that pupils apply their mathematical skills and knowledge consistently well to solve problems
  - providing more opportunities for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 to write meaningfully and at length
  - ensuring that the curriculum provides the broad and stimulating range of opportunities required to fully meet the needs of all groups of pupils, but especially boys.
  
- Improve teaching, so that lessons are at least good, by:
  - improving lesson planning so that pupils have more opportunities to engage actively in learning and independent work
  - improving the teaching of phonics (the links between letters and sounds) so that pupils have a secure grounding in the basic skills needed to learn to read
  - evaluating the progress of individuals and groups more accurately and amending teaching plans accordingly
  - ensuring all teaching is of a brisk pace and challenges and fully engages pupils, hence eradicating any low-level misbehaviour in lessons.
  
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including headteacher, senior leadership team and governance, so that it drives the school forward with the necessary pace and sense of purpose by:
  - evaluating the effectiveness of the school accurately and using the results as the basis for tackling weaknesses
  - ensuring that accurate information on pupils' performance is used to inform whole-school planning, teachers' planning and their professional development, and spending priorities
  - ensuring the quality of teaching is monitored thoroughly and the results are used well to improve its quality and impact on pupils' achievement
  - ensuring whole-school targets are challenging and are used in performance management to hold staff closely to account for pupils' achievement
  - ensuring that the pupil premium is used wisely and makes a difference to pupils' progress in learning
  - taking firm action to ensure all weaknesses are tackled and all school staff are given appropriate support so that they can manage their areas of responsibility effectively
  - ensuring that the governing body fully understands the school's strengths and areas for improvement and that it holds leaders and managers to account.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 12 and 13 March 2013**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all of the 13 classes in the school. Many of these observations were conducted jointly with the executive headteacher. Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime and talked to pupils informally during the inspection.

### **Context**

Since the previous inspection visit in December 2012 two teachers have left the school. One permanent teacher started in January and another is due to take up post after Easter. Currently three classes are being covered by temporary teachers. The governing body has been replaced by an Interim Executive Board.

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

Leaders are clear that data about the progress pupils made in the autumn term have proved unreliable and do not match the progress of pupils seen in lessons and the work in their books. New arrangements are in place for assessing pupils' achievement to ensure senior leaders can gain an accurate overview of pupils' progress, including the progress of specific groups, during the spring term. This includes meetings each half term between senior leaders and class teachers to discuss the progress of each pupil, identify underperformance and agree what further action is required. However, these meetings do not yet involve the coordinator for special educational needs who tracks the progress of individual pupils with special educational needs separately. As yet an overview of the progress of this group, including the monitoring of the learning that is provided for them in classrooms, is yet to be established.

As a result of improvements in teaching, pupils are making better progress in matching letters to the sounds they make. They are beginning to use these skills more readily to read and write words.

Scrutiny of pupils' work shows standards of presentation are improving and there are greater opportunities for pupils to write at length. Pupils' handwriting is better and more pupils in Key Stage 2 are joining their handwriting. However, there is still further work to be done in ensuring teachers help pupils to edit their own writing in order to identify simple errors in punctuation, spelling and grammar.

Improvements in pupils' progress in mathematics are weaker. This is because sequences of lessons are not planned carefully enough to ensure that work is at the

correct level and that learning consistently builds on what pupils have already understood. Similarly, the assessment and marking of pupils' work do not pick up misconceptions that need to be addressed before pupils can successfully move on.

### **The quality of teaching**

With the support of the local authority, leaders and the Interim Executive Board have taken robust action to eliminate inadequate teaching. Consequently, there are improvements in the profile of teaching to those seen at the September inspection. Leaders have a clear view of where teaching is stronger and where it is less successful and the steps they need to take to improve it further. Teachers have received training to support them in teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they represent). Together with new resources, including the use of a published scheme, teachers are more secure in their subject knowledge and about what is expected from pupils.

Teachers are planning lessons to an agreed set of criteria. This has led to improvements in the consistency of teaching across the school but there is only a small proportion of good teaching and most still requires improvement. Pupils' work is marked regularly and comments to pupils are positive and encouraging. However, opportunities are missed to use feedback to spot where pupils may be going wrong, identify what they need to do to improve and help pupils make better progress by challenging and extending their learning.

Improvements in the curriculum have linked writing activities to topics studied in other subjects. This has also led to more opportunities to write for different purposes. Although improvements are most noticeable in the teaching of English, these are not strongly reflected in the teaching of mathematics. Weaknesses remain in matching work to the correct level for individuals and groups of pupils. Similarly, teachers' planning needs to be more precisely informed by what pupils have achieved and by gaps or misunderstandings noted from assessing their work. As a result, sequences of lessons are not carefully planned to develop pupils' mathematical understanding and this is a limiting factor in pupils' progress in mathematics.

In the Reception and Nursery classes the use of the outdoor area continues to be underdeveloped. Although there have been improvements in the organisation and teaching of phonics, further improvement is needed, particularly during sessions where children are given a range of activities to choose from. Too often children's attention is limited and they do not sustain their focus on aspects of learning because these are not carefully structured and planned. This results in some inappropriate behaviour which is not consistently challenged. Senior leaders are aware that the deployment of adults and the inefficient use of space compound these issues and need reviewing.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

In most lessons pupils cooperate well and support each other in shared and paired activities. However, in lessons where teaching is relatively weak, behaviour slips and pupils' attention wanders. In the Early Years Foundation Stage the lack of structured and carefully considered activities both indoors and outdoors means that too many children do not settle to activities for sustained periods. In addition, clear expectations of children's behaviour, a calm, purposeful atmosphere and modelling of what successful learning looks like have not been effectively established and consistently maintained.

Attendance is showing an improving trend and rates of attendance are higher than this time last year. Pupils' attendance is shared with parents during parents' evenings. The learning mentor continues to work effectively at supporting pupils to improve their attendance. Leaders continue to survey parents for their views and, although these remain positive and supportive, they are keen to develop even better systems for communicating with parents.

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

The executive headteacher and deputy headteacher have been effective in bringing about greater consistency in teaching and securing the commitment of the staff to improve further. Their evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning is open and honest and they have identified the next steps they need to take in the school's improvement journey.

Arrangements for the appraisal of teachers' performance have been established. However, all teachers currently share the same whole-school targets for improvement, and individual accountability for pupils' progress and the professional development of teachers and middle leaders are not sharp enough. Leaders acknowledge that this needs development, and opportunities to review progress and clarify targets are planned for the summer term.

Leaders' monitoring activities have focused on ensuring teachers adhere to agreed policies for presentation and the marking of pupils' work. This is beginning to bear fruit. The executive headteacher is clear that future monitoring needs to have a greater focus on evaluating impact and driving improvements to learning and teaching. Criteria for measuring improvement in the school's development plans are becoming sharper. However, there is still further work to be done in ensuring that leaders, particularly middle leaders, can precisely identify what successful outcomes will look like and how these will be checked in order to drive improvement with sufficient urgency. Similarly, there is a need to draw up more detailed and precise action plans for specific areas of improvement in English and mathematics.

The Interim Executive Board has quickly established a programme of frequent meetings to oversee improvement at the school. Its members have drafted an action plan and have secured the services of the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher for the immediate future. They are in discussions about securing the longer-term future of the school. Although data from the autumn term are unreliable, they are using the 'health check' carried out by the local authority, as well as regular reports from the headteacher, to monitor the progress the school is making. However, there is still a need to ensure that they hold middle leaders to account for the progress required in the school's improvement plans. There is clear documentation to show how pupil premium funding was spent during the current financial year but no evaluation of its impact. Leaders are clear that this will be more carefully planned and evaluated for the next allocation in April.

### **External support**

Support from the local authority has been effective in addressing the status of the governing body, resolving staffing changes and conducting 'health checks' to monitor the school's improvement. The local authority officer has been effective in brokering helpful support from consultants, to plan training and provide external audits to ensure the Interim Executive Body is well informed about the school's progress in the absence of secure data. The executive headteacher has begun to establish links with her other school and has plans to use this partnership to develop teaching and leadership further.