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Tony Coppin
Interim Headteacher
The Mayflower Primary School
Main Road
Dovercourt
Harwich
CO12 4AJ

Dear Mr Coppin

Special measures monitoring inspection of The Mayflower Primary School

Following my visit with Susan Cox, Additional Inspector, to your school on 23–24 April 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 on 13 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 may be appointed in any year group.

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 Essex.

Yours sincerely

Julie Winyard
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the school in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics to at least the level expected for their age, by:
 - raising expectations of the progress that pupils should make
 - strengthening the use of assessment information to plan challenging work for all pupils, especially those supported by the pupil premium and lower-attaining boys
 - developing teachers' skills in the teaching of phonics
 - using probing questions to check pupils' understanding
 - making sure that, through effective marking and feedback, pupils know exactly what steps to take in order to reach the next level of attainment
 - ensuring that pupils are given clear explanations of how to carry out tasks, and opportunities to develop as active and independent learners
 - making effective use of resources and adult support to maximise learning
 - building a curriculum that supports the development of basic skills and motivates pupils so that learning moves on at a good pace in lessons.

- Ensure pupils are kept safe and healthy in and out of lessons by:
 - creating a safe environment where pupils are taught to understand how to respond to risks
 - ensuring that all staff are provided with suitable training in child protection and that safeguarding policies are reviewed annually
 - securing a good standard of cleanliness in the building and on the school site.

- Improve the effectiveness of the school's leadership by:
 - developing the role of the governing body so that it holds the school to account
 - ensuring that leaders, managers and staff accurately interpret and use performance data
 - establishing a robust system for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance, including teaching
 - strengthening performance management arrangements for teachers
 - including in improvement plans clear success criteria and dates for monitoring and review
 - ensuring that all leaders have the skills and confidence to drive forward improvements across the school and to manage change.

Special measures: monitoring of The Mayflower Primary School

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 23–24 April 2013

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, groups of teachers, groups of pupils, parents, a group of governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.

Context

Since the previous monitoring inspection there have been no staff changes. Two part-time teachers have been employed to teach small groups of pupils who need extra help. One community governor and one local authority governor have been appointed to the governing body.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Children join the Reception class with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. They make good progress and most are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is particularly helped by their good knowledge and understanding of their learning targets. Most Year 2 pupils are on track to reach the levels expected nationally for their age, and a few likely to exceed them. This is a slightly better picture than last year and shows the improvement the school has made since being placed in special measures. Pupils are also make good progress in Years 3 to 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. They get very helpful guidance from teachers about how to improve their work. In the words of a Year 6 boy, 'Marking and feedback helps me to develop my writing and maths.' Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those known to be eligible for extra funding through the pupil premium make good progress because they are getting the help they need to close the gaps in their knowledge and skills caused by poor teaching in the past.

The quality of teaching

Teaching has improved in all classes since the school was placed in special measures. There is no inadequate teaching. The school's monitoring records, the work in pupils' books and the lessons seen during this inspection indicate that teaching is consistently good. This is because teachers are more confident and understand how to teach good lessons. A few of the lessons seen were particularly

successful because teachers explained precisely what they expected pupils to achieve. This more effective teaching has yet to be shared across the school.

Teachers understand precisely what level pupils are working at and how to help them to get to the next level. They explain this to pupils so that most understand the next steps they need to take. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 can explain exactly what they need to do to achieve their best work. Year 6 pupils talk with great enthusiasm about the extra help they receive to catch up with other pupils of their age. Pupils' understanding of the sounds letters make (phonics) has improved since the last inspection. This is because of the effective training staff have received, the good organisation of teaching groups and the attention to small details in the way pupils say sounds and write them down.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. In some lessons, particularly for younger pupils, teachers do not make their expectations clear enough about what pupils must achieve by the end of the lesson. As a result pupils occasionally lose concentration and do not get as much done as they could.

All safety issues identified at the last inspection have been put right. The single central register has been updated. It includes all new staff and meets national requirements. All staff have been trained in child protection. The redecoration and murals in the Year 5 and 6 classrooms and corridors have transformed these areas. They are clean, warm and child-friendly, and present no safety hazards. This is a vast improvement since the previous inspection.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The outstanding leadership of the interim headteacher has inspired teachers, support staff and pupils alike to work as a team and do their best. He made sure that all staff had good training in what makes a good lesson, and has checked to see that this is being put into practice. The new deputy headteacher has given excellent support to the headteacher. She has organised information about pupils' progress so that teachers can understand it and can plan how to help pupils do better. The key stage leaders have a good understanding of pupils' achievement in their year groups. They help teachers to work out what is stopping pupils from making progress, and to find ways to sort this out. Subject leaders for literacy and numeracy give good advice to teachers about how to improve their subject knowledge and their literacy and numeracy lessons.

Governance has improved since the last inspection. All governors understand what is expected of them. They ask school leaders to explain what is happening to improve pupils' achievement. The questions governors ask are not yet written down in the records of their meetings. Governors visit the school regularly and have a good

knowledge of how school improvement is progressing. They are in the process of appointing a new, permanent headteacher to make sure the improvements made by the interim headteacher continue.

External support

The school has made good use of the support and advice offered by the local authority. This has helped its leaders to take very fast action to make the necessary improvements identified when the school was placed in special measures. The local authority representative took an active part in this monitoring inspection.