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12 July 2013

Mrs Ros Munro
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 to your school on 10 and 11 July 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 third 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 (IEB) and the Director of Children's Services for Salford and as below.

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 third monitoring inspection on 10 and 11 July 2013

Evidence

During the inspection I observed the school's work. Together with the executive headteacher, I observed teaching and learning in all of the classes and scrutinised samples of work in pupils' English and mathematics books. I held telephone conversations with the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and a representative of the local authority. I also scrutinised a range of documentation relating to the work of the school.

Context

Since my last visit, a new teacher, who is also the mathematics leader, has started at the school. Four teachers have resigned and will be leaving at the end of the summer term and three new teachers have been appointed to start in September. The IEB have decided that the school is to become an academy and to appoint a substantive headteacher.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Early indications from the end of year national assessments at the end of each key stage show that pupils' achievement is improving. A greater proportion of pupils than last year achieved expected levels in English and mathematics. In the Reception class, more children achieved appropriate outcomes for their age. However, children's outcomes are lower in English and mathematics.

The school now has more reliable data from the tracking of pupils' progress. This shows an improving picture in pupils' achievement this year, although over time pupils' progress remains weak because of a legacy of underperformance. Information about the progress of groups of pupils, for example, those with special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language or those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, shows that these groups of pupils are not improving as well as their peers. This is because their needs are not being precisely met in lessons and there is too little accountability for their progress. Pupils' knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is improving and their work shows that they are using this knowledge in making plausible attempts at spelling unfamiliar words.

The quality of teaching

The newly appointed teacher has strengthened the teaching in Year 2 and leaders are keen to share this practice more widely. In mathematics lessons, pupils are more engaged in their learning particularly when they are given interesting things to do to help them think more deeply about how mathematics helps them to solve puzzles logically. Problem solving is developing but there are examples where teachers' subject knowledge still needs developing further to ensure that the work pupils are given is precisely matched to their ability and makes sure they understand the concepts being taught.

In English, pupils' writing is supported by helpful links with other subjects. Teachers are improving the planning of sequences of lessons which lead to extended writing tasks. However, there are inconsistencies across the school. For example, there are weaknesses in Year 1 where there is too much focus on separate activities, which do not build skills and

understanding sequentially towards opportunities to write more substantial, creative and independent work.

The marking of pupils' work is improving particularly in English. Scrutiny of pupils' work found opportunities, particularly for older pupils, to reflect and respond to teachers' comments on how to improve and draft better writing as a result. However, in mathematics, although marking is developing, the next steps identified by teachers do not lead to better progress across sequences of lessons and increased challenge for pupils.

Support, including that of a lead teacher in a partner school, has been effective in bringing about significant progress in addressing issues seen in the Reception classes at the previous visit. Children now show sustained concentration in suitable activities and follow clearly established routines well.

A new leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has been appointed for September. Leaders have identified that the next step is to focus on the role of adults and ensure that they are skilled in developing and extending children's learning through effective interventions and accurate use of mathematical language and standard English.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour continues to be a positive aspect of lessons. They cooperate well and show independence and enthusiasm, particularly when the work they are given to do is interesting and has just the right amount of challenge. Pupils now are more likely to get working sooner in lessons and this is improving the pace of learning.

Pupils' attendance has improved slightly compared to the same time last year. However, the attendance for particular groups reveals some lower attendance and gaps which need to be addressed. The attendance of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has improved more than other groups and the gap is closing, but leaders acknowledge there is more to be done to address the attendance of other groups.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Strong leadership from the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher, who are well supported by the local authority, has continued to drive improvement in the school. Their evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate and honest. As a result, the IEB have clear and accurate information about the performance of pupils and teachers. The action plan has been improved since the last monitoring visit and articulates clearly the improvement leaders require and how these are going to be achieved. Leaders have reviewed systems for teachers' performance management and ensure these are more tailored to individual teacher's performance. Leaders are well aware of where there are continuing weaknesses in the quality of teaching and individualised plans to address this are in place.

The IEB meets frequently to monitor reports from the headteacher and the local authority about the school's progress. Together with the local authority, they have decided to appoint a substantive headteacher. They accept that the extent to which they hold middle leaders to account is at an early stage of development. Middle leaders now have data about pupils' progress and have conducted joint observations with external consultants. However, there

has been little follow up where issues are identified and middle leaders are not yet holding teachers to account and insisting on improvements within their areas of responsibility. For example, too often the inspector found that the work set for pupils with special educational needs and the feedback they receive does not meet their needs. This has not been addressed by the coordinator and as a result, the achievement of these pupils lags behind that of their peers.

External support

A range of effective support has been coordinated with the local authority, a partner school and external consultants. This has resulted in improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage, more practical activities in mathematics lessons and improvements in the overall quality of teaching. However, leaders and the local authority are clear that there remains much work to do to address some residual weaknesses in teaching.