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Mrs S Boulton
Headteacher
Oakfield Primary School
Morecambe Avenue
Scunthorpe
Lincolnshire
DN16 3JF

Dear Mrs Boulton

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Oakfield Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 10 and 11 October 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and findings of the inspection. 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 most recent monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged as having serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in February 2013. 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 the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for North Lincolnshire and as below.

Yours sincerely

Ian Richardson

Additional inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2013

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is at least good by:
 - making certain that all teachers learn how to use information about pupils in their class consistently and precisely when planning lessons so that pupils are challenged appropriately ensuring that the emphasis and impact of teaching on pupils' progress in writing and mathematics is consistently strong as they move through the school
 - ensuring that pupils' books are all marked thoroughly, and that marking provides clear feedback about how well pupils have done and how they can improve their work
 - insisting that all written work done by pupils is carefully presented in all subjects
 - ensuring that all teachers explain clearly to pupils what they are to learn in lessons and check that pupils have understood.

- Raise standards in mathematics and ensure that all pupils make progress which at least matches national expectations by the time they leave school in Year 6 by:
 - checking progress in mathematical skills as pupils move through the school
 - ensuring that additional help out of lessons contributes appropriately to pupils' needs.

- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - equipping those in leadership roles with the skills and knowledge necessary to understand how to use results from monitoring activities appropriately, so that they have a good understanding of what works well and what does not
 - ensuring that all leaders can measure and justify the impact of intervention work on pupils' progress.

- Make certain that all governors receive the training they need so that they can challenge leaders correctly and therefore fulfil their roles to ensure the school is as effective as possible.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 10 and 11 October 2013

Evidence

The inspector met with the headteacher and two other members of senior leadership. The inspector also had meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, members of the school council and a local authority officer. The headteacher and inspector made two learning walks and jointly observed three lessons. The inspector observed the headteacher's feedback to one of the teachers who had been observed. The inspector observed two further lessons, made two further learning walks and, in addition, listened to pupils read. The focus of the two-day inspection was to look for progress on the four points for improvement given in the annex above.

Context

While there were some staff changes over the summer break there were no key members of staff who left the school. There were some new staff appointed for the autumn term who are being inducted into the school. There have been changes to the role of some staff to support progress against the school's improvement plan.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The need to raise standards in mathematics was identified in the February 2013 section 5 inspection report. The school leaders now require half-termly pupil progress meetings to identify pupils who are making insufficient progress in mathematics or other aspects of the core curriculum. Previously these considerations were made on a termly basis. The increased frequency is identifying students' needs earlier such that teachers in the school can now respond more quickly to address these needs with appropriate planning and interventions. The headteacher checks planning for classes, including the mathematics provision, more frequently. All staff have now received training on planning through staff meetings. All planning by teachers for their class is now captured weekly on the school's learning platform and is accessible to all staff. As a result, planning is now more consistent.

The school now uses a database for recording performance and consequentially to generate targets for pupils. Pupils from Year 1 upwards are now using target books in all lessons to review their own progress which is then validated by class teachers and checked by senior leaders. Pupils interviewed said they were working harder as a consequence and teachers reported pupils being more driven to succeed. Parents are now more aware of targets and have one-to-one sessions with class teachers where discussions are more detailed and rigorous than previously. Parents have received guidance on supporting their children better through a booklet called '*How to support your child with maths*' being issued to all families.

There is an increased frequency of lesson observations for all staff against a new rigorous lesson observation schedule. This action is designed to raise the standard of

teaching across the school. In the last round of observations carried out jointly with a local authority officer, 91% of lessons were good or better. Professional development has been provided for all support staff on key areas of their work, such as presentation; lesson observation; role of teaching assistants; effective questioning; marking, and active learning. Learning ambassadors, eight gifted and talented pupils from Year 5, have received training for their role of observing lessons with a focus on active learning. They are keen to do their best for the school but as yet they have not observed lessons.

Training for governors has continued since the first monitoring inspection. Governors have attended training on carrying out learning walks and on safeguarding. They had already received training on RAISEonline before the first monitoring inspection. Pairs of link governors have been assigned to literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. They have met with their curriculum leaders and discussed planning for their areas. They are working towards undertaking lesson observations with senior staff. The frequency of governor visits has increased and governors are better placed to be critical friends to the school. The governing body is in the process of a skills audit in collaboration with the local authority to be reported to a full governing body in November. This audit will inform future appointments and plans for governor training. The Chair and vice-chair attend local authority briefings for their role. The Chair of the Governing Body is committed to the Chair Development Programme from the National College for School Leadership.

Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- Pupil voice surveys show pupils now know their level and targets and how to improve. Performance data for the year ending summer 2013 show 17% of pupils made two levels of progress in mathematics. This academic year performance data show 50% of pupils have already made two levels of progress.
- There are extra booster sessions in mathematics for targeted groups during afternoons and some out-of-hours sessions. One group of Year 6 pupils goes to a local secondary school to prepare for secondary education and secondary staff are setting aside time to support primary colleagues in the teaching of mathematics.
- The timetable has been reviewed and the proportion of time given to literacy and mathematics in the morning session has been increased and modified to include 'Big Maths' that focuses on developing mathematics skills such as mental arithmetic more thoroughly. The Early Years Foundation Stage now begins each day with mathematics work.
- Parents' views gathered at events such as 'Reading Afternoon' and 'Meet the Teacher' sessions show they have positive views of the school leadership and the provision made for their children.
- All staff have been trained in the use of new pupil tracking software and they are responsible for entering their own class's performance data. Tracking of pupils' performance is discussed twice each half term at whole staff meetings and there is half-termly moderation of assessments.
- The challenge of bringing about improvement is implemented by more rigorous monitoring and evaluation. For example, the challenge of improving writing is

approached through work scrutinies. All senior leaders attended local authority training on moderation and work scrutiny.

- A team of advanced skills teachers has delivered training and moderation on writing and has given feedback to teachers individually.
- Good practice and improvement are supported through the staff handbook and the publication of new policies such as that on handwriting, presentation and marking.
- The staff handbook contains a section entitled 'non-negotiables' that focuses on the key areas of teaching and learning, planning and curriculum, classroom environment, presentation, handwriting, expectations in literacy, and expectations in numeracy.
- Marking is now more consistent with written feedback to pupils seen more frequently. Pupils now have target books and their consistent use better informs pupils on what is expected in lessons and what they can do to improve.

External support

The senior leaders in the school have worked closely with local authority officers on self-evaluation and the use of performance data for tracking pupils' performance and setting targets. The tracking system now in place informs subject leaders and all staff of the performance and progress of individual pupils. The local authority has provided professional development training on moderation of lesson observations involving joint observations with a local authority officer. There has been collaboration with a local primary school to improve provision in mathematics and to plan professional development for both schools.