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15 November 2013

Will Wawn
Executive Headteacher
David Mackie
Head of School
Ferry Lane Primary School
Ferry Lane Estate
Tottenham
London
N17 9PP

Dear Mr Wawn and Mr Mackie

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Ferry Lane Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 15 November 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection, which took place in September 2012. 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 and the Director of Children's Services for Haringey.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Winter
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Introduce more effective teaching methods and support to enable children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 who speak little or no English to make good progress in their learning by:
 - improving the expertise of teachers, especially in these year groups, in working with these pupils
 - drawing on the expertise in Key Stage 2 to offer additional support to pupils so that they learn to speak English quickly and can participate fully in lessons.

- Improve the achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - improving teachers' knowledge of the best ways that children, particularly boys, of this age learn
 - ensuring staff promote children's thinking and problem-solving skills, and their knowledge of letters, sounds and writing, through play activities
 - providing consistently challenging activities that capture children's curiosity and engage them for extended periods of time, especially when playing outside
 - carry out sharply focused assessments that indicate clearly the next steps in children's learning.

- Raise the levels of achievement for all pupils in Key Stage 1 by ensuring that teachers:
 - have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and provide tasks that meet their differing abilities
 - enable pupils to acquire secure knowledge of the sounds letters make and apply this to their reading and writing
 - select appropriate strategies and resources that enable all pupils to engage in whole-class sessions
 - use time effectively to enable pupils to apply and consolidate newly acquired skills
 - provide tasks that motivate and challenge pupils to do their best.

- Ensure leaders and managers refine the school improvement plan so that there is a sharper focus on the key developments that are needed to bring about rapid improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and clear ways of measuring success.

- Enable members of the governing body to develop their understanding of data about the school's performance across all key stages to offer greater challenge and hold the school to account.

Report on the third monitoring inspection on 15 November 2013

Evidence

During the visit, I met with the head of school and the executive headteacher. I also spoke to two members of the governing body. I had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I evaluated the school's improvement plans. I visited the classrooms and scrutinised documents relating to pupils' progress and the outcomes of monitoring activities.

Context

Since the last monitoring visit, four teachers have left the school including two that were part-time. Three teachers have joined the school to replace them. A seconded teacher from a local school is working in the Early Years Foundation Stage to help to improve the quality of teaching. Two new members have joined the governing body.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The pace of improvement has quickened and the new leadership team is addressing the school's weaknesses with vigour. Leaders have set ambitious targets for pupils' progress and attainment.

In the summer 2013 assessments, Key Stage 1 standards improved in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below average. Most of the Year 6 pupils made good progress from Key Stage 1 and some made accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, overall, attainment fell at the end of Year 6 and is below average. Those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding attained higher levels than other pupils at Key Stage 2 and gaps that are evident in Key Stage 1 are closing by the time pupils leave the school. The school's information indicates that Year 6 pupils are on-track to make good progress and to reach national average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. Most other year groups are making good progress now and in those year groups where progress has not met school targets, leaders have allocated additional support to help pupils catch up.

Leaders know that achievement in mathematics lags behind reading and writing but they do not have a clear enough view about what precisely needs to improve. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making good progress due to the quality of the support they receive. Small group teaching programmes are evaluated quickly to ensure they are helping to improve pupils' skills. The inclusion manager monitors the quality of support and the progress these pupils make. Very recent arrangements to support pupils with a statement of special educational needs and some of those supported at school action plus are not appropriate because

pupils are being taught by unqualified adults for a significant part of their day.

Teaching across the school has improved and leaders have dealt with any inadequacy. Leaders observe lessons regularly and teachers receive helpful feedback. Teachers have targets for improvement and these are followed up with subsequent observations to ensure that matters improve quickly. They also have individual training and support plans, which include access to local authority training, support from the linked school as well as the school's own training programme. Plans to further improve the quality of teaching are credible and leaders make their expectations of teachers much clearer now. New staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage are supported by a teacher from a local school to ensure that provision improves. It is too early, however, to see the impact of this work.

Leaders look in pupils' books and monitor the impact of teachers' marking but they are not making full use of this activity, for example to judge the progress pupils make or check that teachers' assessments are accurate. Leaders have concentrated their monitoring activities on English and mathematics and do not yet have a clear enough view about the quality of teaching across other subjects.

There is a more robust system to track pupils' progress and attainment. Teachers are held to account for pupils' progress and those who are falling behind are helped with extra support. Leaders have implemented rigorous performance management systems to ensure that teachers are rewarded for the quality of their teaching and their contribution to school improvement.

The governing body is increasingly effective. Governors now have the information they need to challenge the school and hold it to account. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use achievement information to compare the school's performance with national benchmarks.

Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- Leaders are ambitious for the school and they have secured the confidence of school staff.
- Effective systems and procedures are in place to monitor progress and to address weaknesses.
- Leaders have been effective in improving the quality of teaching.
- Governors are appropriately holding the school to account.

Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- Leaders have not conducted a forensic review of what precisely needs to improve in order to address slower progress in mathematics.
- The current arrangements to teach some of the pupils with special educational needs are not appropriate.

- Leaders are not using their reviews of the work in pupils' books to judge the progress pupils are making over time.
- Leaders do not have a clear enough view about the quality of teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics.

External support

The local authority has provided training to improve governance, teaching and leadership. It conducts regular reviews of the school's progress and provides helpful feedback to school leaders. The local authority representative knows the school well and monitors it closely.