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28 November 2013

Tracie Riley
Interim Headteacher
Shelton Junior School
Carlton Avenue
Shelton Lock
Derby
DE24 9EJ

Dear Ms Riley

Special measures monitoring inspection of Shelton Junior School

Following my visit with Andrew Lagden, Additional Inspector, to your school on 26 and 27 November 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 in February 2013. 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.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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 Learning and Inclusion for Derby City local authority.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve teaching so that it is good or better, and accelerate pupils' progress by making sure that all teachers:
 - make good use of assessment information in order to set work at the right level of difficulty for all pupils
 - provide pupils with good guidance and resources so that they can complete tasks more quickly and successfully
 - question pupils well to check their understanding and to help them to extend their knowledge of new ideas
 - improve their marking and give pupils more opportunities and responsibility for improving their work.

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics by making sure that:
 - English lessons for younger pupils give an appropriate emphasis to the development of their basic skills in grammar and how sentences are constructed and punctuated
 - teachers check that pupils are more accurate when adding and subtracting to solve problems in mathematics
 - teachers expect pupils to write in detail and at length in a range of subjects.

- Improve leadership and management to good or better and increase its impact on teaching and pupils' achievement by:
 - improving the quality of whole-school action plans to guide staff's work
 - ensuring that leaders rigorously evaluate the impact initiatives are having on the outcomes for pupils
 - sharing information on pupils' progress more effectively with subject leaders so that they can make a more purposeful contribution to developing their subjects
 - improving the capacity of governors to hold school leaders firmly to account.

- An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership may be improved.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 26 – 27 November 2013

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the interim headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team, the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Governing Body and two representatives from the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documents relating to the school's progress towards the points for improvement raised at the last inspection and the safeguarding of pupils.

Context

Since the last monitoring inspection, the governing body underwent an external review of governance and the substantive headteacher has resigned. The interim headteacher continues to lead the school with the interim deputy headteacher, a recently appointed assistant headteacher, and the senior leader for mathematics, assessment and Year 3, who now has an increased and integral role on the senior leadership team.

Achievement of pupils at the school

There is little evidence yet of standards in reading, writing and mathematics rising, although pupils' work in books this term shows improvement upon work in books in the last academic year. More robust analysis of data on progress and attainment and coaching for staff have raised expectations for pupils' learning and progress. Consequently, curriculum planning and the content of lessons are generally tailored more precisely to pupils' abilities. While there remains some inconsistency across the school, action taken so far has redressed the historic trend of regression in Year 3 pupils' progress this year, and they are currently making good progress. Senior leaders are now supporting staff to ensure that pupils make much more rapid progress in every lesson and over time in order for pupils to catch up with the attainment of those in other schools. There is closer checking of any pupils at risk of underachievement in order to ensure the school increases its effectiveness at reducing the long-standing gaps between the achievement of different groups.

The quality of teaching

Teaching is improving more generally, although not all teaching is of consistently good quality. The school has accurately identified which staff require greater levels of support in order to become good practitioners. Senior leaders are all highly effective classroom practitioners and act as strong role models for other staff. They are coaching colleagues well. They are precise about necessary improvements and check that guidance given is put in place immediately. Lessons are now mostly planned around pupils' immediate and emerging learning needs as they are assessed daily for their understanding and progress. In those lessons where teaching is less effective, pupils are prevented from learning for themselves when they might do so by teachers talking for far too long when giving instructions and directions. In these

situations, activities are not chosen carefully enough to contribute sufficiently to challenge pupils' learning. The learning challenge in these sessions is still not high enough for those who learn quickly. Instructions and explanations are not precise enough for those who learn more slowly. The marking of pupils' work has improved, particularly in response to pupils' writing and mathematics. Occasionally, the high-quality marking is not followed through as well in other subjects and here pupils are not always given a next step to help them reach their target for improvement. Pupils do not all know what they must do to achieve the next National Curriculum level or their personal targets. When these are referred to in lessons, they are not readily available for all pupils because they are not included in all books or visible from all tables.

Since September, the school has changed the timetabling of the working day. It now delivers three extra basic skills sessions to all pupils each week. Leaders are checking the quality of these sessions thoroughly. Since the last monitoring inspection, the school has also introduced a new style of guided reading. Staff continue to work hard to improve the quality of these sessions. Leaders have begun to help staff to check that every pupil gains enough from them, and not just those who are working more closely with the adults. Although staff have increased their expectations for writing across all subjects, staff still do not remind pupils enough to practise writing to a high standard in all that they do, for example, when they complete their reading journals.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good overall. Pupils' attitudes to learning and to being good citizens are generally positive. They make a strong contribution to the school and the wider community. Occasionally, a very small minority of pupils' attention diminishes in lessons where the adults are not maintaining their interest through overly long introductions, or when work is too easy or not well enough explained. Pupils understand how to keep safe. They are attending better and are increasingly punctual.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Since the last monitoring inspection, leadership and management have strengthened. The senior leadership team has improved in effectiveness and there is a new assistant headteacher who is driving up the quality of literacy provision across the school. Together with the new senior leader for mathematics, who is also very clear of her role, they are leading on developing staff capability and introducing new initiatives and ways of working. It is too early for this yet to be evaluated to have impacted fully on raising standards. Other subject leaders are making a much more purposeful contribution to developing their subjects because they are clearer of their roles and responsibilities and are being held to account for this through tighter systems for managing their performance.

The school improvement plan is focused on improving pupils' attainment and progress and dealing with the areas for improvement identified during the section 5 inspection. Action already taken or planned also demonstrates that staff and the

governing body have prioritised their work effectively and responded well to information gained from the previous monitoring inspection. There is no up-to-date school self-evaluation form, but all leaders have an accurate understanding of the current quality of provision. They recognise that support for pupils who require additional help is not yet checked upon carefully enough to assess the difference it is making, so that the school knows it is getting best value for money. All adults ensure that pupils have equal opportunities to take part in all activities on offer during the school day and both before and after school. A learning mentor ensures that pupils are not disadvantaged to learn despite any social or emotional needs they may have. The school is working hard to increase the engagement of parents in their children's learning by inviting them to participate in out-of-school activities and to come into school and learn more about what their children are learning in the classroom.

Following the external review of governance, governors have evaluated their own skills and practice. They now have a clear action plan for supporting the school and for holding leaders to account for its performance. Members of the governing body have undertaken training which has increased their understanding and their capacity to help and improve the school.

External support

The local authority school improvement service has provided high-quality support to the school. This has specifically helped to increase the effectiveness of the school's governing body and other school leaders, who are now working very well as a team. It has also provided a good level of support to ensure that all leaders understand and make better use of all data available to the school, including detailed analysis of pupils' progress. The Local Leader in Education school with which the school is partnered has been helpful in beginning to improve the quality of teaching. There is no complacency in the school's recognition that there continues to be more to do to ensure consistency in reaching a good quality of education and achievement across the school.