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13 February 2014

Mrs Boughen  
Acting Headteacher  
Deepdale Junior School  
St Stephen's Road  
Deepdale  
Preston  
Lancashire  
PR1 6TD

Dear Mrs Boughen

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Deepdale Junior School**

Following my visit with Vanessa MacDonald, Additional Inspector, to the school on 11 and 12 February 2014, 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 September 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 appoint a maximum of two 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 Interim Executive Director for Children & Young People for Lancashire.

Yours sincerely,

Allan Torr  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September 2013**

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - matching learning tasks to the needs of different pupils more precisely, including setting harder work for the most-able pupils
  - ensuring that all pupils are actively involved in lessons so that they do not become distracted and disengaged in their learning
  - regularly checking during lessons that pupils have understood each step in their learning and, if necessary, adapting the lesson to help pupils before moving on to new work
  - improving the quality of lessons intended to improve pupils' reading skills
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to read regularly and write at greater length
  - setting higher expectations for the presentation of work in books
  - giving pupils more opportunities to work independently, solve problems and find things out for themselves in mathematics
  - giving pupils clear guidance on how they can improve their work, when marking books and setting targets for the next steps in learning.
  
- Raise standards and ensure that all pupils make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly the most-able, those of average ability, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, by:
  - strengthening the quality of support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
  - fully meeting the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language
  - making better use of teaching assistants especially at the beginning of lessons
  - ensuring pupils supported by the pupil premium reach the same standards as other pupils
  - improving the quality and use of record-keeping and target-setting so that all staff are clear what different pupils need to achieve and how best to support and challenge them in doing so.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance by:
  - monitoring the progress of all groups of pupils over time, paying particular attention to the progress of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, and taking prompt action to prevent any underachievement
  - empowering staff to use data effectively in order to provide pupils with the correct level of challenge in their work
  - increasing the contribution of subject leaders to developing a well-planned curriculum that inspires pupils in their learning
  - making more frequent checks on the quality of teaching and learning and providing appropriate support and challenge for staff to improve
  - ensuring governance secures stable staffing and leadership as rapidly as possible
  - undertaking an external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 11 to 12 February 2014.**

### **Evidence**

I held a discussion with four members of the governing body and looked through minutes of governing body meetings that have been held since my last visit. I also met with a representative of the local authority and looked at the records of visits made by local authority staff. Inspectors observed teaching in 11 lessons and looked through the work of three pupils from each class to see how much progress they are making. I held discussions with a pupil from every class in two groups.

### **Context**

Since my previous visit, two temporary assistant headteachers started at Deepdale. They have been brought in from other local schools to model good teaching and to boost the school's capacity to improve itself. The previous coordinator for special educational needs finished at Christmas and a new coordinator started, again from a different school.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

The school's data show clearly that pupils do not get off to a good start in Year 3 and their progress is slow. However, in Year 4 pupils make better progress only to slow again in Year 5. In Year 6 pupils' progress is rapid. Already, for example, in Year 6 with only half of the school year complete, around 90% of pupils in reading and writing have made expected progress from their starting points in Year 3. Their progress is slower in mathematics so far with three quarters of pupils making expected progress.

Pupils' achievement in reading across the school has improved. Those who spoke to me confirmed that they read more often in class and at home and read a wider range of authors. Some pupils mentioned that they would like reading books that were more of a challenge because they were keen to improve their reading skills more quickly.

Pupils' writing is improving. One reason for the improvement is because pupils know through teachers' marking and feedback what they need to do to write more complex sentences. Years 3 and 4 pupils, for example, who spoke to me, knew about how to use adverbial phrases and sub-clauses to write more complex sentences. However, their achievement in writing is being hampered because some teachers use worksheets that are too easy and which require pupils to write at most one or two words only. Pupils' progress is also not as quick as it could be because there is an over focus on styles of writing, when pupils have not yet grasped how to write sentences and paragraphs correctly.

Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve better in some classes than others. This is because in some classes, terms are not explained well enough, there are not enough visual images to show pupils what the teacher means and there are missed opportunities by teachers to correct and improve pupils' pronunciation, diction and knowledge of new language.

Pupils' achievement in other subjects, such as history, geography and science, has not improved. One of the reasons is because the work they are given to complete is too easy. For example, pupils with special educational needs in Year 3, despite the fact they can write sentences and phrases accurately, are asked only to draw, colour pictures in, cut and stick parts of worksheets or add words into a sentence when the word is given at the bottom of the page. These activities significantly hinder pupils' progress and are more appropriate for pupils in Reception or Nursery classes.

## **The quality of teaching**

Overall, the quality of teaching is improving quickly as a result of the good training for teachers. Some of this has been through close working with teachers from other schools, by staff training provided by Lancashire local authority and by training from the highly effective headteacher and deputy headteacher. As a result, some teaching which has required improvement has improved to be good and some inadequate teaching has improved. However, despite these improvements, teaching in Year 3 is still not good enough to bring about good progress. This can be seen in lesson observations and in pupils' work.

In the lessons where pupils made better learning, which during the inspection were mainly in Years 5 and 6, teachers have responded to their training and monitor the class well and reshape the activities in response to pupils finding the work difficult or finding the work easy. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 5, the teacher noticed a group of pupils who were finding multiplication with decimals easy. She quickly changed the activity to give the group a more complex task.

In lessons that still need improvement: teachers use incorrect standard English; pupils do not make much progress from what they already know or can do; pupils who are lower ability are limited by the activities, with the result that they cannot show that they can do more complicated things; and there are missed opportunities to include pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Pupils' presentation in books has improved, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Here pupils take pride in their work and continually try to improve their setting out, their labelling and their handwriting to make their work more pleasing to the eye. In some pupils' books in Year 3, however, books were sprinkled with doodles and graffiti. Pupils who spoke to me said they were able to use pens in Year 2 and could take care laying out their work, but sometimes in Years 3 and 4 the books and the worksheets do not allow them to present their work neatly, for example, trying to squeeze work into small squares in mathematics books.

Teachers' marking and feedback has improved. Daily 'fix-it' sessions are used well in some classes for pupils to correct any mistakes they made in the previous lessons and answer any challenges or questions posed by the teachers. However, in some classes errors are not picked up by teachers. In Year 3, for example, pupils made mistakes in adding three numbers together because they had misunderstood how to set out the mathematics correctly by placing tens in the same column and units in the same column. These errors were not picked up by the teacher until a few lessons later, but the work was marked correct and awarded with two house points. House points in some classes are meaningless. They are used to praise work which has clearly not moved pupils' learning on.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 who spoke to me during the inspection were exceptionally keen for more challenging work and to be shown how to reach higher levels. They had an idea of a suggestion box or board in each class to be able to comment on the level of challenge in the activities or how to improve teaching. For example, they said that mathematics is too easy 'we do not feel as satisfied or challenged after a maths lesson as we do other lessons.'

Most pupils across classes who spoke to me said that music teaching is poor because: the teacher often has trouble controlling the class; there is too much non-music activity such as making origami shapes; and keen pupils who want to learn sometimes have to sit reading books because other pupils cannot behave or the teacher cannot manage behaviour well enough. Pupils also mentioned that the teaching in information and communication technology (ICT) is still far too easy. They said they do not learn much that they do not know already and would like to learn how to touch type so they are better prepared for their future careers. For my next visit the school should improve teaching in subjects such as history, geography, ICT and music.

Another suggestion from pupils, which inspectors also agree with, is for teaching assistants to be used better to support all pupils, rather than teaching those of lower ability in every lesson. Senior leaders have reviewed the use of teaching assistants and have assessed their quality and impact on learning. They have received training and, as a result, some now ask some good questions to make pupils think and give useful prompts to extend pupils' knowledge and skills.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' behaviour is improving, particularly in Years 5 and 6. In these classes, pupils sit in rapt attention; they are engrossed in their work because their activities and the teaching are interesting, meaningful and exciting. However, in some lessons pupils are still distracted, off task and disengaged. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils did not listen to the teacher. In addition, without her noticing, they pretended to hit each other with rulers and mark each other with whiteboard pens.

Pupils who spoke to inspectors had very mixed views about the use of golden time as opposed to the previous behaviour management system. They said some teachers reduce golden time very harshly and quickly, particularly in music, while others are too lenient. Some felt the previous system was more effective. The school should review its use of golden time and its use of house points. It should also look wider at pupil voice, for example, through re-establishing the school council and the choice of activities at golden time. At the moment the behaviour system is not working for some classes, particularly in Years 3 and 4.

Pupils said that behaviour would improve at lunchtime if there was more equipment and more things to do and inspectors agree.

## **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

The quality of governance has improved rapidly in a very short time. A key criticism during my last inspection visit was the commitment of governors. A local authority governor who rarely attended and rarely sent apologies for non-attendance was asked to leave. Governance has improved, attendance at meetings is higher, meetings are more frequent and governors are more visible to parents. They have also become more assertive making sure the school acts for the community and for parents and there is a keener focus on value for money. The local authority reviewed the quality of the governing body, established an audit of skills for individual members and, as a result, appointed a new experienced governor who could work alongside, train and coach individual governors. As a result of these improvements, governors have a better oversight and knowledge about what is happening in school and are better placed to challenge and support the school. They also have a much better understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Senior leaders have been effective in improving the quality of teachers' planning. As a result, teachers now plan for the different levels of ability in their classes. Leaders still need to take action to make sure lower-ability pupils are challenged enough and are given the chance to reach higher levels. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have also been highly effective in improving how well teachers monitor learning in class; how they teach reading and phonics (letters and the sounds they make); and systems to track the progress of different groups of pupils. Leaders have used the results of lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work to identify targeted training for teachers. The focus now should be towards improving the teaching of mathematics and other subjects, such as geography, history, music and ICT.

There has been an improvement to the leadership of special educational needs through the secondment of a specialised coordinator from another school. She has already reviewed the special educational needs register. Consequently, pupils who were on the register for medical needs and those who are disabled have rightly been taken off because they should make the same progress as every other child. She has also started to track what specialised teaching the pupils have and whether this is meeting their needs. She has also started to look at the impact of teaching assistants to see where further improvements are needed. So, although there is still much to do, the provision for pupils with special educational needs has started to get better.

The impact of teachers who lead subjects and those who lead other aspects of the school is still limited. The contribution of the assistant headteachers to strengthen leadership has yet to show much positive impact, because the senior leaders and other teachers have had to support them. For example, as yet there are no minutes of meetings held by the assistant headteachers with teachers in the year groups which they oversee. As a result, the headteacher cannot use the notes of the meetings to improve the school further and the meetings have been mainly about peripheral and organisational aspects, rather than improving the quality of teaching in year groups. In contrast there are signs of increasing capacity to improve with the leader for sport and physical education taking action to improve teaching. At my next visit I will be looking to check that middle leaders are having a positive impact on improving teaching, as well as pupils' achievement and behaviour.

## **External support**

There has been good support from the local authority which has had an impact on raising the quality of teaching and on standards. Advisors have conducted an external review of governance which has been successful in creating an action plan for improvement. The secondment, for example, of a new governor and a special educational needs coordinator has shown positive benefits to governance and to the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The secondment of two assistant headteachers has provided extra teachers to help improve standards and has the aim of improving leadership. The local authority also provided expert help to check the accuracy of assessment, particularly on entry into Year 3.

The local authority's and school's action plans have been improved significantly to make sure teachers are not drowned with too many different training events and initiatives in a short space of time. The focus this half term has been on reading, which has had a positive impact.

The local authority has spent considerable time and effort in securing the short- and medium-term leadership and future of the school. As a result, the highly effective headteacher will stay with the school until its long-term future is decided.