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Rachael Wilmot
Headteacher
Harrington Junior School
Derby Road
Long Eaton
Nottingham
NG10 4BQ

Dear Ms Wilmot

Special measures monitoring inspection of Harrington Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 13 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 recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place on 28 November 2013.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, three other teachers with leadership roles, the Chair of the Governing Body and two representatives of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plans were evaluated.

Context

There have been no significant changes since the last inspection.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

You and your leadership team show a determination to bring about the necessary improvements. Together with them, you are giving due prominence to improving teaching and learning. Leaders identify where shortcomings in teaching need to be improved through formal lesson observations, checking pupils' work and other visits to teaching sessions. Suitable steps are being taken to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics, such as reorganising groups. This is helping teachers and other adults to match work in lessons more closely to the needs and abilities of the pupils. You have introduced a structured phonics (the sounds that letters represent) programme to support pupils who are below the expected level and are making sure that the checking of these pupils' progress is robust.

You have refined systems for checking pupils' progress across all year groups. It is expected that each class teacher and teachers who have leadership roles play a crucial role in identifying underachievement more quickly and that they are held accountable for pupils' progress. Evaluations so far show an improving picture of pupils' progress overall. However, there is less evidence of specific groups of pupils making accelerated progress, such as those who are supported by the pupil premium funding (additional funding provided by the government for particular groups, including for those pupils who are eligible for free school meals).

The school leadership team now includes two recently appointed members: the deputy headteacher and the subject leader for mathematics. Your leadership team's expectations are communicated clearly. Your expectations of teachers are linked to the nationally published teaching standards and you are in the process of linking teachers' progression on the pay scale to the progress made by their pupils.

Governors are responding suitably to the recommendation that they undertake a review of governance. A pre-audit meeting with a National Leader of Governance and a subsequent meeting of governors has identified strengths and weaknesses in governance. A planned review of governance in March 2014 is expected to lead to a clear set of recommendations and action.

The school's own action plan includes all of the areas identified in the previous inspection. It fits in neatly with the local authority's action plan. Both documents include specific measures to inform evaluations of the school's progress in raising standards and improving the quality of teaching. Milestones and actions are clearly identified along with the people who have responsibility for leading each activity. Half-termly progress review meetings are scheduled to evaluate the impact of actions being taken. These meetings include a contribution by school leaders, governors and the local authority representatives.

The local authority is providing training to improve teaching. It has also facilitated a link with a successful school which has a track record of securing and sustaining improvement. The headteacher there is providing mentoring support for you which you value.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's action plan is fit for purpose.

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

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Strategic Director of Children and Younger Adults for Derbyshire and as below. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dilip Kadodwala
Her Majesty's Inspector