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

Dear Ms Riley

Special measures monitoring inspection of Shelton Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 11–12 March 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 third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place on 6 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 appoint a newly qualified teacher to Year 4 when required.

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 third monitoring inspection on 11–12 March 2014

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. Her Majesty's Inspector 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, a new class teacher has been appointed to Year 3 and the school has appointed four new teaching assistants.

Achievement of pupils at the school

The majority of pupils are now beginning to make the progress which is nationally expected in every year group and subject. Because they have ground to catch up, this is still not sufficient progress to ensure that they achieve the National Curriculum levels expected of all pupils by the time they move on to secondary education. Pupils are making better progress in reading than they are in writing and mathematics.

Pupils who are entitled to the government's funding for pupils at risk of falling behind (the pupil premium) receive additional resources and support. The school is not yet successfully closing the gap between their achievement and that of other pupils. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making slightly better progress than other pupils, except in Year 4 and in mathematics in Year 5. They are also still not achieving as well as all other pupils.

Since the last monitoring inspection, 'skills ladders' have been introduced for reading and some aspects of mathematics. Pupils successfully identify what skills they are using in that lesson and what level they can expect to achieve. This is helping to speed up their learning and tackles weaknesses effectively. It is too early to gauge the impact of this on raising standards. Pupils' writing in books shows signs of improvement. Improvement is particularly evident in literacy and mathematics books, and guided reading journals. However, this is still not consistent in every class.

The quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is improving. The large majority of teaching is now good. Staff who have received greater levels of support have responded very well to this

input. The school has worked successfully to eradicate inadequate teaching and there is now some outstanding teaching worthy of sharing. Senior leaders are outstanding role models for other staff and they support their colleagues well. Pupils themselves help to share their knowledge with other pupils and sometimes lead sessions, and this works very well.

The school has introduced short, sharply focused separate sessions for teaching key literacy and numeracy skills for all pupils. These sessions are taught well and are beginning to secure pupils' learning effectively in spelling, grammar and punctuation, and in calculation and solving practical mathematical problems. Teachers use more accurate data to identify which pupils are still behind where they should be and what ground they need to make up. Consequently, teaching, particularly in these sessions, is very carefully and accurately targeted to pupils' immediate needs. Activities across all subjects are now mostly well adapted to the abilities of all learners, including those who learn quickly.

Marking has become much more thorough. Pupils understand how to improve their work and what they need to do next. This is because they are very clear about the criteria for the National Curriculum levels and the assessment focus within the lesson. The high expectations for writing and presentation in literacy and numeracy books, together with improvement points from marking, are still not as well applied across science or topic work.

Staff are now taking greater responsibility for the progress of all groups of pupils within the classroom. They are not yet ensuring that any underachieving pupils are progressing more rapidly than other pupils in order to successfully close the achievement gap.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour and safety of pupils is typically good. Pupils are very keen to do their best in lessons and they are interested in what they are learning. Pupils remain focused throughout the sessions, as the lessons move along quickly and the content is stimulating. Because relationships between adults and pupils are so strong, pupils respond well to being given specific roles within the lessons and around the school. Behaviour at lunchtimes is also improving as play has become more purposeful. Pupils continue to understand how to keep safe. Attendance is now stabilising at just above the national average but is hindered by a very small number of families continuing to take their children out of school for holidays. Punctuality has improved because pupils are happy and want to be in school. The school has robust procedures in place for supporting pupils and families in need.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Senior leaders have raised expectations for teaching and learning and improving the quality of education at the school. They are ambitious for the school to become good in a rapid, but realistic period of time. They have responded well to the points for development given to them at the last school inspection. They are aware that there is still not enough consistency across the school to ensure the good achievement and progress of all groups.

Since the last monitoring inspection, some aspects of leadership and management have strengthened; some aspects have not improved sufficiently well. The leadership of literacy and mathematics is good. Actions for these two areas have been prioritised smartly and, together with high-quality professional development and coaching for staff, there have been marked improvements in teaching. The organisation of the timetable for these subjects, and the use of pupil progress data to sharpen the focus of lessons, mean that pupils are more challenged than previously and know what is expected of them. Information sharing between staff has greatly improved.

The school is not managing the performance of staff effectively. Targets for teachers are not specifically linked to their class. Their special areas of responsibility are not linked closely enough to raising standards. Not all leaders use their time wisely to ensure their contribution to the school is making a significant difference. The school does not yet know whether they are using the funding for pupils at risk of falling behind well enough, and which initiatives are making the most difference. The school is not doing enough to accelerate the progress of these pupils to ensure they catch up. Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching, but are not yet evaluating the school accurately or assessing the impact of all its work on pupil outcomes.

The governing body has not built sufficiently on information which came out of the external review of governance. It has not continued to check its role or ensured that its priorities are matched to those in the school's improvement plan. There has been much governor activity, but this has not been planned carefully enough and has had too little impact. Governors are not always asking the right questions of leaders and others to sufficiently hold the school to account. They have asked too few questions about the effectiveness of additional funding coming into school and the performance management of staff in relation to whether the school is successfully closing the achievement gap.

The school is beginning to have some success with working more closely with others outside of the school community; in particular, the neighbouring infant school, and parents and carers. This a positive step forward in forging valuable partnerships. Governors have a greater presence at school events, but have not yet considered their role precisely in engaging stakeholders linked to key points and times in the

school's improvement plan. Governors now understand the school data more, but they remain overly reliant on information provided to them by the interim headteacher.

External support

The local authority has provided good-quality support to senior leaders when it is requested. Their priorities and plans for continuing to support the school are sound. They have verified the school's judgements on the quality of teaching and the standards of work in books, which all staff have found helpful and reassuring. The Local Leader in Education school, with which the school is partnered, continues to provide some support in classrooms, and the partnership with the neighbouring infant school is effectively aiding the sharing of good and outstanding practice.