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Mrs A Bradley
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Bradley

Special measures monitoring inspection of Oakfield School

Following my visit to your school on 25 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 fifth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in May 2012. 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 Management Committee and the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire.

Yours sincerely

Sue Morris-King
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Increase the rate of progress pupils make in improving their behaviour so that they learn effectively in all lessons and behave with respect and courtesy towards each other and adults by:
 - ensuring attendance to lessons dramatically improves by the end of the summer term 2012
 - ensuring all staff consistently follow school policies in managing behaviour
 - developing ways for pupils to reflect on their own behaviour and identify how they can improve it.

- Improve the quality of lessons so that all teaching is mostly good or better by:
 - focusing on what pupils should learn in lessons based on what they already know and their interests
 - ensuring teachers check pupils' progress throughout lessons and adapt their teaching if necessary
 - effectively tackling low literacy skills
 - ensuring managers take decisive action when teaching is inadequate
 - developing the role of the teaching assistants so that they support pupils' learning effectively.

- Ensure senior staff use achievement and behaviour data more effectively to direct the work for improvement by:
 - analysing data and using it to accurately inform evaluations
 - checking that achievement data is accurate
 - using the analysis of data to produce perceptive action plans that reflect realistic aspirational targets.

Report on the fifth monitoring inspection on 25 March 2014

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, the Chair of the Management Committee and a representative of the local authority, and held a telephone conversation with the a local authority consultant who is supporting the changes to Key Stage 3 provision. The school is about to change its context, as explained below. This one-day inspection focused particularly on the transition to the new arrangements.

Context

Currently, the Key Stage 3 pupils on Oakfield's roll are educated off site but are the responsibility of Oakfield. In December 2013 the local authority decided that from the start of the summer term, the school will only take pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2. Key Stage 3 pupils who would previously have attended the school will remain on a mainstream school's roll and the local area partnerships will arrange and monitor their provision. This transition has already begun. At the time of the previous inspection there were 11 Key Stage 3 pupils on roll, all being educated off-site at alternative providers. There are now only five. At the time of this inspection there were 26 primary-aged pupils on roll. This number is due to rise to 30 in the summer term.

Achievement of pupils at the school

The school now has a comprehensive range of information that enables them to track pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. This information indicates that more pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 are now making progress at the nationally expected rate than at the time of the previous monitoring inspection. The school aims for all pupils to make more than the nationally expected rate of progress in order to catch up on learning they have missed, therefore sets them challenging targets. Some pupils are now starting to meet these targets in some subjects, thereby exceeding nationally expected rate of progress.

At Key Stage 3, pupils' progress is still patchy, with differences from pupil to pupil and subject to subject. It is, however, much improved on the progress they were making last term and earlier. Around half of the Key Stage 3 pupils who were on roll last term are now on the roll of a mainstream school and reasonably well settled into their placements.

The quality of teaching

The school regularly carries out a range of monitoring activities to evaluate the quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2, including lesson observations and learning walks. Together with the school's assessment information, this evidence indicates that the quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 continues to improve, with a greater proportion of teaching being good. In the lessons visited briefly during the inspection, pupils were mainly engaged and interested in their work, and sometimes approaching it with great enthusiasm. In one class, pupils were working very well together in pairs, co-operating and talking about their mathematics. In another, pupils were eagerly carrying out a practical mathematics exercise which involved finding right angles in several rooms. Classrooms show some good examples of pupils' work across the curriculum. In all lessons, teaching assistants and teachers were working as close teams to support pupils' learning.

Senior leaders regularly visit the Key Stage 3 pupils who remain on the school's roll. A consultant has carried out useful observations of the quality of teaching at the off-site provision, with an appropriate emphasis on safeguarding. These show reasonable and sometimes good quality of teaching and tuition, a judgement that is backed up by the progress that some pupils have started to make.

For pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 the school has introduced good, thorough assessment of pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills. These assessments are combined with staff's knowledge of the pupils to determine what the 'sticking points' are – what is stopping pupils making more progress – and then to decide what action needs to be taken. The same 'sticking points' idea is working well with academic subjects, where teachers and senior leaders are being analytical about why some pupils are not making enough progress in English, mathematics or science.

The assessment of Key Stage 3 pupils is equally thorough. This means that each pupil will join their new school with a comprehensive range of information about their academic achievement and their behavioural, social and emotional progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour on the school site is stable and largely calm. The school's data about the use of physical intervention shows that the number of incidents have remained at around the same level for the last few months, and that the majority of interventions are minimal and for short periods of time. There have been no fixed-term exclusions from the school since the beginning of the autumn term. There is a positive and rewarding culture that helps pupils to manage their own behaviour.

Around three quarters of pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 have attendance that is in line with the national average for mainstream primary schools. A few have very low attendance. The attendance of the majority of Key Stage 3 pupils is very low.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The acting headteacher, well supported by the acting deputy headteacher, has set a clear direction for the school. Positive actions that had begun at the time of the last inspection, such as those illustrated above, are now a day-to-day part of the school. The school has a good range of monitoring information about all aspects of the school's work. However, this is not used to evaluate the impact of the actions that have been taken, or to provide a clear and succinct overview of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.

The new arrangements for Key Stage 3 are well underway. The acting headteacher has worked closely with the partnerships. The training and support she has offered has been well received.

The management committee is well organised and asks thorough and searching questions. It has played its part in ensuring that the new arrangements are sound. The membership of the committee is being changed appropriately to reflect the new arrangements.

External support

The local authority has provided good support for the school's leaders. Appropriately, they have modified the support in response to the school's changing needs. There has been a close focus on the new arrangements.