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21 March 2014

Ms Angela Ryan and Ms Doris Law
The Executive Headteacher and The Acting Headteacher
West Green Primary School
Woodlands Park Road
Tottenham
London
N15 3RT

Dear Ms Ryan and Ms Law

Special measures monitoring inspection of West Green Primary School

Following my visit with Ronnie Young, Additional Inspector, to your school on 19 and 20 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 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 one newly qualified teacher 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 Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Haringey.

Yours sincerely

Carmen Rodney
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve urgently the quality of teaching in order to raise the achievement of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1, for boys and reading across the school, by ensuring that:
 - expectations are consistently high and work is sufficiently challenging and matched to the different levels of ability so that more pupils reach the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6
 - teachers assess pupils' progress more regularly in lessons and, where needed, adapt and change work more quickly to help pupils make faster progress and keep on task
 - teaching assistants are involved in supporting pupils' learning from the start of the lesson so that pupils are immediately engaged in activities
 - more opportunities are planned into lessons for pupils to develop and apply their reading skills in all subjects
 - all marking matches that of the best, so that pupils know clearly why work is good and specifically what to do next to improve and that pupils are expected to respond to teachers' comments.
- Improve leaders' capacity to secure and sustain improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement by ensuring that:
 - the pace of change speeds up and evaluation of the school's work focuses firmly on its impact on pupils' achievement
 - weaknesses in teaching, including that in the specialist resource base, are eliminated rapidly with a sharp focus on pupils' progress during lesson observations
 - transition is well planned and effective across the year groups and key stages to make sure that pupils' attainment does not regress in their new class, especially between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1
 - an agreed plan for improving literacy, and in particular how to improve standards in reading for boys, is put in place as soon as possible, including precise details about how activities across the curriculum will enable pupils to develop their reading and writing skills
 - rapid action is taken to address the underachievement of different groups, including boys and those pupils supported through the pupil premium funding, monitoring its impact closely
 - rapid action is taken to improve rates of attendance so that these improve to being at least in line with the national average
 - the skills and expertise of new and inexperienced leaders with particular responsibilities are developed, especially in the support of teachers to improve rates of progress within their year groups
 - the interim executive board ensures that all policies, including those related to performance management, are agreed and in place as soon as possible.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 19 and 20 March 2014

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with senior and middle leaders, including the newly appointed head of school, two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the School Improvement Adviser from the local authority.

Context

Since the first monitoring visit, key senior staff have been appointed as part of the restructuring. The newly appointed head of school currently supports the school part time and will take up the full-time post at the beginning of the summer term. The interim executive headteacher has also been appointed to the permanent position and the acting headteacher will resume her former roles. Two members of staff will be leaving at the end of the current term. The surplus teachers in the school will take over their responsibilities.

The interim executive board is currently considering the future of the school, but discussions with the local authority and the Department for Education are at the very early stage.

Senior leaders have begun to focus more sharply on boys through employing role models as coaches and mentors and considering boy-friendly resources. This aspect of provision was not considered in detail during the monitoring visit.

Achievement

Pupils enjoy attending their school and feel that the best feature is the fun lessons that are packed with interesting and practical activities. Most pupils join the school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below what is typical for their age. At least half of every new cohort is at the early stage of learning English. The progress that pupils are now making is far more secure across year groups and classes. First, although the quality of teaching is variable, it has improved since the last inspection. Second, better systems have been introduced to assess and monitor pupils' progress and, third, a good range of targeted strategies has been introduced and is contributing to pupils making better progress.

Senior leaders have quickly identified the main weaknesses in literacy and numeracy and have begun tackling them. Useful work is being done to improve pupils' reading skills across all classes and year groups. A new literacy programme is being rolled out and has been introduced in Years 1 and 2. Across the school, reading is being promoted; for example, classes are using the new on-line reading systems to borrow and record their reading. In Year 6, a sharper focus on developing comprehension skills is contributing to pupils improving their skills to read texts closely and use information accurately. Assessment indicates that pupils are reading more, but it is

too early to comment on the full impact of this, as well as the new mathematics scheme.

Information on pupils' progress indicates that pupils are making better progress, with a minority making good progress. As a result of pupils' low starting points, the rate of progress still needs to be faster for pupils to meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. This is particularly important in year groups where pupils have had a succession of teachers. The challenge for the school is to ensure that teaching is consistently good or better to enable pupils to reach the aspirational targets which have been set for 2014.

The quality of teaching

A good range of strategies, such as coaching, mentoring and teachers visiting partner schools to observe good practice and engage in planning, has been introduced. Teachers have also benefited from regular observations and feedback to develop their practice. Those spoken to say they have been well supported to improve their practice. Direct monitoring is increasing the teachers' awareness of 'good' practice. As a result, teachers have requested a quick follow up visit when an observation does not meet expectations.

Teaching, previously inadequate, has improved, but too much still requires improvement, resulting in progress not being consistently rapid. When teaching is good, activities are well structured and the skills taught are known and understood. The working environment is positive which leads to pupils demonstrating keenness because they are clear about what they have to achieve in a given time. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils took part in role play as journalists interviewing each other and making presentations. They achieved well because they were shown how to use interviewing techniques when questioning and asking questions about different characters. Generally, when teaching is good, pupils have opportunities to work together and reinforce new ideas. Additionally, some teachers are prepared to encourage pupils to work creatively. This was seen in a Year 3 music lesson, for example, where pupils composed tempos linked to a string of words after listening to a musical piece.

Opportunities are generally well planned for pupils to work together and support them to develop their social skills.

Teaching requiring improvement is not carefully planned, primarily as activities are not well taught or chosen for pupils to make enough progress. In some classes, expectations are not high enough for all pupils, in particular the more able. They are not always sufficiently challenged. On other occasions, work is repetitive and, sometimes, not all pupils are aware of the tasks they need to complete. Too often, pupils are compliant and passive and assessment does not underpin teaching. Teaching is now rarely inadequate and occurs only when planning and choice of activities lack thoroughness.

Marking is much improved, based on the good practice researched at one of the partner school. Pupils have begun to respond to teachers' comments. However, spelling and other technical errors are rarely corrected, even though teachers realise that language skills are not good enough.

The support provided by teaching assistants is generally good. For instance, in the Support Base, the positive team work between the higher learning teaching assistant and class teacher is now leading to pupils making good progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is good in a minority of lessons, but some aspects still require improvement. Pupils generally feel that there are still some disruptions in lessons. Observations of pupils in lessons show compliance and passivity. Attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average for primary schools. The school has also reached the target set by the local authority.

Pupils feel safe and are assured about their safety, primarily as the teachers are visible in and around the building. Pupils also have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying; but name calling, including the use of racist terms, is sometimes used. However, pupils are emphatic that peer mediators and teachers intervene quickly to 'sort things' out. Additionally, they use the worry and/or bullying boxes to write about their concerns if they need help. The school has not had any permanent exclusion since 2011. The few fixed term exclusions are handled well, with appropriate support and advice provided for individual pupils. For example, early help is used effectively.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The appointment of the interim executive headteacher has had a positive impact on driving improvement. Strong leadership and clarity of vision in relation to school improvement have led to changes in the culture of the school. Actions to drive improvement have been swift and decisive, with important consequences. Performance management has been used as a lever to spell out high expectations required and the consequences when they are not met. Assessment, previously inaccurate, is now robust and reliable. The school now has a bank of data which teachers are beginning to use when planning activities. Teachers have begun to take ownership of the information on pupils' progress. For example, they explained that they are now challenged during progress meetings to explain the achievement of each pupil and outline the actions to accelerate progress. Consequently, this attention to detail, when combined with increased monitoring of teaching, is contributing to staff being held responsible for pupils' achievement. Nevertheless, leaders recognise that, as yet, not all teachers are planning thoroughly.

Partnership work with Campsbourne and Millfield Primary schools have contributed to teachers developing a greater understanding of selecting and making better use of resources to increase pupils' progress. For example, marking skills have been enhanced through joint partnership work. Additionally, middle leaders have started to work with their counterparts in these schools to develop as well as their subject

expertise. For example, the school is at the very early stage of introducing new literacy and numeracy programmes based on intensive research work with the partner schools. Although the partnership is contributing to subject coordinators developing a range of leadership and management skills, these middle leaders have still to be trained to undertake formal observations and monitoring. A few are currently enrolled on a nationally recognised leadership and management course.

Action planning addresses all areas for improvement identified in the last report. However, not all actions taken to date are fully reflected in the plan. Senior leaders recognise that it is essential that the work undertaken is carefully recorded and evaluated. For example, a range of new policies is being developed, the pupil premium funding and provision for special needs are being reviewed but these are not included in the plan.

Members of the interim executive board are very knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They bring a wealth of experience to the school from the civil service, education, finance and human resources management. They are focused sharply on driving standards and are clear that the minimum expectation has to be accelerating progress underpinned by good or better teaching. The interim executive board's no-nonsense approach and strategic direction are well linked to a work plan which covers two years of keeping the school's work under review. Each governor, with a specific portfolio, is able to use their expertise to thoroughly monitor the school's work and ensure that visits are used to validate reports and actions taken. This approach has been helpful in providing challenge and checking that actions taken are leading to improvements.

External support

Leaders at all levels value the good quality and intensive support the local authority is providing. This includes brokering arrangements with the local and neighbouring good and outstanding primary schools. The selection of an experienced interim executive board has increased senior leaders' efficiency in relation to managing the workforce. For example, senior leaders have been able to act quickly and sensitively when using performance management to move staff on. Senior leaders are now using the expert knowledge to begin restructuring the workforce.

The local authority's regular visits to discuss pupils' rates of progress and review the quality of teaching have been very helpful. These have drawn on external expertise from local advisers and recognised practitioners from an outstanding school. Comparison of external review with the school's internal assessment is helping to validate the school's progress. Further challenge, through the School Project Board every half term, is helping to keep the school alert in relation to the rate of pupils' progress, especially as challenging targets have been set for the current school year.

The appointments of experienced senior leaders have led to the local authority being able to give more attention to pressing structural matters, such as finance, staff and the school's future. This is enabling senior leaders to have more time to focus on the day-to-day work of running the school, such as supporting staff to improve their practice.