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8 May 2014

Mrs Jo Robinson

Headteacher

Skipton, Ings Community Primary and Nursery School

Broughton Road

Skipton

North Yorkshire

BD23 1TE

Dear Mrs Robinson

**Special measures monitoring inspection of Skipton, Ings Community Primary and Nursery School**

Following my visit, with Joan Williamson Ofsted secondee, to your school on 7 May 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 in July 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 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 Director of Children's Services for North Yorkshire and as below.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Keeler

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Improve pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and attendance by:
  - working in partnership with parents to reduce unauthorised absence during term time so that attendance is at least in line with the national average
  - raising teachers' expectations of pupils to show good attitudes to learning and to complete and present their work to a good standard
  - providing a wider variety of more interesting and challenging activities so that pupils are constantly engaged in the lesson, maintain their concentration and behave well.
  
- Urgently improve leadership and management, including governance, and the school's capacity to improve without significant external support by:
  - developing the skills of leaders at all levels so they can rigorously and accurately monitor teaching and take prompt and effective action to tackle weaknesses
  - developing a clear, robust and detailed system to accurately track the achievement of different groups of pupils and the performance of teachers
  - ensuring that the governing body gains the necessary knowledge and skills to hold school leaders and managers to account for pupils' progress and the quality of teaching
  - drawing up whole-school action plans that identify exactly what should be done to improve the school, when and by whom, and that these are followed through with robustness and urgency.

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 7 May 2014**

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the interim headteacher, the assistant headteacher, members of the interim executive board, a representative of the local authority and pupils. The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation including the school's analysis of pupils' attainment and progress, records of monitoring the quality of teaching undertaken by senior leaders and the minutes of interim executive board (IEB) meetings.

### **Context**

Following the resignation of the previous headteacher at the end of the summer term 2013, the local authority arranged for two headteachers to oversee the work of the school. An assistant headteacher was appointed at the beginning of the spring term 2014, thereby ensuring a daily leadership presence. An IEB was established in November 2013.

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

The trend of underachievement that has been evident for far too long has finally been arrested. This is supported by an analysis of school data, pupils' contributions during lessons and a scrutiny of completed work relating to all pupils from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6. Pupils are making significantly better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. Since the previous monitoring inspection rates of progress have accelerated, especially in reading and writing.

The overwhelming majority of pupils in Year 2 are on course to achieve national expectations in all subjects by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to make expected progress in mathematics and more than expected progress in reading and writing. It is anticipated that standards in English and mathematics are likely to be at least in line with the national average with some pupils attaining the higher levels. This is a realistic expectation and represents a significant step forward. Pupils currently in Year 5 are on track to make more than expected progress in the core subjects and expectations are that standards will continue to rise in 2015.

There is no gap in attainment between those pupils entitled to support as a result of pupil premium funding and other pupils. In Years 1 to 6 these pupils are currently meeting age-related expectations in numeracy and are at or above in reading and writing.

## **The quality of teaching**

Pupils are making better progress because the quality of teaching has improved in all classes. It has improved because all staff have worked hard in developing their skills and in meeting the challenge and expectations that senior leaders have placed on them. The teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 1 has improved substantially because there is a greater appreciation of how pupils learn. Pupils are better placed to access learning because they are using resources that accurately reflect their level of mathematical understanding. Attention is being given to the use of correct mathematical vocabulary, and key words are being carefully explained to pupils. Activities are now planned that enable pupils to actively participate in their learning by manipulating appropriate equipment which helps them to acquire mathematical skills and understanding. This approach is reflected in the progress they are currently making.

Expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving continue to rise and this is evident in work which caters for all levels of ability and incorporates an appropriate degree of challenge, especially for more able pupils. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress. It is particularly effective when the teaching assistant knows exactly what is expected and most importantly what it is pupils are to learn. This enhances the quality of the interaction between the assistant and pupils because their work is focused and purposeful. Marking contains feedback to pupils that tells them how they are doing and how they may improve their work further.

Better use is being made of communication technology to support teaching. However, it now needs to be employed selectively in order to maximise learning opportunities. When pupils are set tasks during lessons, particularly writing, the pace at which they work is not as quick as it should be. This is due to a legacy of weak teaching and low expectations. These aspects need to be addressed if the progress pupils have made in the past two terms is to be maintained.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

No inappropriate behaviour was observed during the monitoring inspection. This is because pupils are more engaged in their learning and enjoy their lessons. Teachers have clear expectations of how pupils should behave and adhere to the school policy for managing behaviour. Pupils therefore know what is and what is not expected of them and act accordingly. Attendance has increased dramatically since the previous inspection and is now high. It is no surprise therefore that as pupils' behaviour and levels of attendance have improved so has pupils' progress.

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

The senior leadership team under the direction of the interim headteacher has worked tirelessly to address the areas identified for improvement in the most recent inspection report. A focus on developing teaching has resulted in improvements in

pupils' achievement. This has been accomplished by setting high expectations of staff and pupils, making effective use of support provided by the local authority and fostering a sense of teamwork. School leaders now need to ensure that the initiatives introduced during the past academic year are embedded into the work of the school so that the momentum of improvement is sustained. Systems to check pupils' progress are now in place and underachievement is quickly identified and addressed. Performance management is being used to develop teachers' skills and hold them to account for the progress pupils make.

The IEB monitors the work of the school well. They have acquired a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Challenge and support are given in equal measure and this is helping to drive improvement. Plans are in place to engage more closely with school staff to listen to their perceptions of how change is being managed and also to learn at first-hand how improvements are making a difference to pupils' achievement. This move is to be welcomed as it not only gives members of the IEB a better insight into what is going on but also provides an opportunity to celebrate the school's achievements.

### **External support**

The local authority together with the Harrogate and Rural Teaching Alliance has provided effective assistance for school leaders, the IEB and teachers over the past three terms. It has been effective because it has supported the development of teaching and learning particularly in relation to literacy and mathematics and this has enhanced pupils' progress.