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

Dear Ms Riley

Special measures monitoring inspection of Shelton Junior School

Following my visit with Peter Heaton, Additional Inspector, to your school on 10–11 June 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 fourth 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 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 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 2103

- 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 fourth monitoring inspection on 10–11 June 2014

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and other staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors 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, and from the beginning of the summer term 2014, the acting headteacher has been appointed to the permanent headteacher role; there are two new teaching assistants and one new governor.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Attainment is rising. Year 3 pupils are on track to reach age-related expectations by the end of this year; Year 4 pupils are on track in their reading and mathematics, and are very close to where they should be for their age in writing. Senior leaders rightly still identify attainment as an area of concern. Despite this year's good progress for all year groups, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have still not accelerated sufficiently well to ensure that they all reach the National Curriculum levels expected for their age. The school has not been successful in making sure that pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after are doing as well as all other pupils. Because they have fallen so far behind pupils in other schools in previous years, Year 6 pupils will still not meet the expected progress required of them by the end of Key Stage 2. Too few pupils will attain the higher test levels. However, well-founded predictions are that the results from the 2014 end of Year 6 tests are likely to be the highest in four years; with a slight rise on 2013 in reading and a significant rise on 2013 in writing. This is at least partly a result of very high-quality teaching by school leaders.

Year 3 pupils have made significantly greater progress than other pupils this year. This is due to consistently good teaching and early additional support given to those pupils who require it. Across the whole school, pupils are doing better because teachers accurately and rigorously assess their progress and specific learning needs, both through high-quality marking and ongoing checks during each lesson. Staff are checking thoroughly for the reasons why any pupils receiving additional support are still not making the accelerated progress expected of them. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making more progress than other pupils, except across all subjects in Year 4 and in mathematics in Year 5, where they have struggled to keep up. Staff are working to address this.

The quality of teaching

A high proportion of teaching is now more typically good. High-quality coaching of staff where teaching requires improvement is making a notable difference. Staff have been responsive and willing to learn; so that features of good teaching practice are now becoming embedded. There are successful daily sessions of teaching key skills, which have helped to improve pupils' reading, writing and understanding of calculation. Pupils regularly refer to the carefully prepared 'skills ladders' to aid their learning. They understand what next steps they must take because of the information around the classroom, use of targets in their exercise books and thoroughly marked work. They are now given time to improve their work and are becoming more adept at self-evaluating their own work. Pupils' presentation in their literacy and numeracy books is much improved and they are now producing a greater quantity of work. However, pupils too often forget to apply their writing target to their written work in lessons other than literacy and still do not have enough opportunities to write at length in other subjects. Therefore, the high standards expected of them in their literacy and numeracy lessons do not follow through to all subjects.

Teachers are becoming increasingly skilled in questioning pupils to make them think hard and utilise their increasing vocabulary in their responses. However, sometimes, the activities that teachers set do not challenge all groups sufficiently well. The sheets teachers provide do not always allow pupils to lay out their work carefully and systematically; for example, in mathematics or when planning stories. Regular features of the lessons are interesting and short introductions, and appropriate summaries of the learning at the end of the session, paving the way for the next lesson. The skills of teaching assistants have been raised and they now make a valuable contribution to supporting pupils within lessons and in one-to-one sessions with pupils, helping to successfully close gaps in pupils' learning and accelerate their progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is mainly settled; allowing purposeful learning to take place. There have been successful initiatives where older pupils support younger year groups in their reading and mathematics; helping to nurture care and empathy amongst pupils. At lunchtimes, mini-leaders have taken their responsibilities in the playground seriously and help their fellow pupils to play purposefully. Midday supervisors have been trained to engage pupils in play and apply the behaviour policy consistently; this has made a difference to pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes. The breakfast club ensures that pupils who attend are settled at the start of the school day. Just occasionally, a very small minority of pupils still lose interest within the lessons and can cause some low-level disruption amongst others. Class teachers consistently

apply the school's behaviour policy, which is understood by pupils. Consequently, there is a very small number of fixed-term exclusions.

Punctuality and attendance have improved because pupils want to come to school and because of the successful incentive scheme adopted this year. Staff follow up any poor attendance rigorously, working closely with external agencies where there is a need. There is a much greater emphasis on pupils successfully transferring across from the neighbouring infant school, and greater preparation for the transfer to their secondary education. Pupils say they feel safe in school and they adopt safe practices. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and when on school trips. Their behaviour on residential excursions is exemplary and they conduct themselves sensibly. All of these practices have been enhanced through their successful involvement in the 'Investors in Pupils Award'.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The quality of leadership and management is continually improving. The governing body has secured the role of the headteacher, who is increasing the competency and skills of the team around her. Leadership of literacy and mathematics continue to be strong and there is improved leadership of the use of additional funding coming into school to support pupils at risk of falling behind. The support for those pupils who are not behind others, but who are not achieving their potential, has not been as fully considered. Performance management of all staff is now rigorous. Staff are held to account for the progress and achievement of every pupil. The management of support staff is outstanding; with their greater involvement in planning for pupils' specific learning needs and tracking the progress of the pupils they work with. The curriculum outside of core subjects is weak in some areas. In topic work and science, for example, standards are much lower than in literacy and numeracy, and pupils do not understand that they should apply their personal targets to all of their work. Work to improve these areas has already begun.

The governing body has undertaken additional training, which has particularly equipped them to understand school data and enabled them to more rigorously challenge school leaders about the progress and achievement of all pupils, including specific groups of pupils. The governing body has checked on the headteacher's management of staff performance and requested additional assessment of pupils to ensure that there is no slippage at any time during the year. The Chair of the Governing Body has ensured that the school complies with its statutory responsibilities towards safeguarding pupils by oversight of all of the necessary checks on new staff. There has been a thorough analysis of the membership of the governing body to ensure that it has an appropriate range of knowledge and expertise. This, coupled with the governing body's involvement in recent recruitment and human resources issues, has necessarily slowed its contribution to school evaluation and updated planning for prioritising and guiding its own work. The

governing body has had an external review of its work, but has not followed up on the action points well enough to date. The roles and responsibilities of individual governors are now secured, but more training is necessary to ensure that individual governors gather useful and robust information for the school and that their activity is appropriately tailored to wider school improvement planning. Collaboration with the neighbouring infant school has been initiated, but not yet fully exploited. There is still too little joint working; for example, around both schools' mutual work with pupils' families and developing consistent approaches to teaching and learning to further improve transition between Years 2 and 3.

External support

The quality of the external support provided for the school by the local authority has been appropriate. It has had a positive impact on increasing the knowledge and skills of school leaders, particularly in using and interpreting school data. Development for staff has been well prioritised and has equipped them to undertake the next cycle of school review and school improvement planning. The governing body has not received sufficient support from the local authority to assist governors in monitoring the school effectively and independently.

Partnership working with the partner primary school and neighbouring infant school has helped the leadership of the school. This has not been exploited well enough to specifically develop governance. Closer working with the nearby secondary schools has aided transition for the current Year 6 pupils and enhanced planning ahead for Year 5 and 6 pupils in the future.

Priorities for further improvement

- Make sure that expectations for pupils' learning and writing are as high in other subjects as in their literacy and numeracy.
- Ensure that more pupils reach higher levels in tests at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Improve governance; ensuring governors have a precise plan for their work and are more directly contributing to school improvement.