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4 July 2014

Mrs Rachael Wilmot
Headteacher
Harrington Junior School
Derby Road
Long Eaton
Nottingham
NG10 4BQ

Dear Mrs Wilmot

Special measures monitoring inspection of Harrington Junior School

Following my visit with Denise Dalton, Additional Inspector, to your school on 2–3 July 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 November 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 Strategic Director of Children and Younger Adults Services for Derbyshire and as below.

Yours sincerely

Dilip Kadodwala
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2013.

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils make at least the progress they should by:
 - ensuring that teachers know how well their pupils are doing, and use this information to make sure that pupils do not repeat work they can already do and that those who need extra support are given it
 - making lessons more demanding for more-able pupils
 - making better use of lesson time so that pupils get more work done
 - marking pupils' work effectively so that pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve further
 - developing teachers' use of questions to check on and deepen pupils' understanding
 - identifying quickly those pupils who are not making enough progress, and using effective ways to help them catch up.

- Improve the impact of school leadership by:
 - looking more closely at how well teachers are teaching, with specific reference to the progress that pupils make, and giving recommendations to teachers on how they can improve
 - identifying rigorously the school's weaknesses
 - making action plans which clearly show what difference the actions will make, how quickly, and who will be responsible for implementing them.

Ofsted will make recommendations for action on governance to the authority responsible for the school. When writing to the responsible authority, the recommendations for actions will include an external review of governance to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 2–3 July 2014

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, looked carefully at a range of school documents and met with staff, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. Most of the inspection time was spent observing pupils in class, in an assembly and at play to check the quality of teaching, learning and behaviour and safety.

Context

One teacher left in April 2014. One teacher is on long-term absence and will leave at the end of the summer term 2014. Two new teachers have been appointed from September 2014.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Information from teachers' current assessments of pupils' work shows some variation in their rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 6, pupils' progress shows improvement from their different starting points from Year 3. Pupils have recently completed their national tests at the end of Year 6. Senior leaders are confident that these pupils' attainment will be broadly average at Level 4 and the higher Level 5 in writing and mathematics, using national 2013 figures as a benchmark. In reading, pupils' attainment is expected to be average at Level 4 and at Level 5. Evidence from pupils' workbooks and inspection lesson observations indicate that, in Year 6, pupils' progress is better in comparison to previous years. The school's tracking of pupils' progress shows that, in Year 3, achievement in reading and writing is not yet secure enough to meet national expectations. Similarly, in Year 4, pupils' progress in writing and, in Year 5, progress in mathematics, are not yet good enough. Limited progress in mathematics is particularly for the less-able pupils, whose specific learning needs have not been sufficiently met. Pupils are now being taught in mixed-ability groups to help improve pupils' progress.

Outcomes for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, some of whom are also identified as having special educational needs, are mixed across the school. In most year groups, these pupils' progress in writing matches that of other pupils in the school. In Year 6, the gap is narrowing in reading and writing, but not as quickly in mathematics. This is also the case in Year 5 for mathematics and in Year 3 for reading. Where gaps are narrowing, the school can demonstrate the positive impact of the use of the pupil premium funding. An effective example is the use of qualified teachers to provide one-to-one tutoring for pupils for specific periods of time. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs respond well to adults, including class teachers, who provide focused yet challenging support.

Detailed data analysis and tracking procedures are providing evidence needed to identify underachievement and to target interventions. It is providing teachers with the evidence they need to underpin their lesson planning, but its use is not consistent.

The quality of teaching

Teaching is improving but its impact on achievement over time is not yet fully secure in all classes. The training being provided is helping teachers to think about their practices and respond to recommendations made by senior leaders, external consultants and by teachers in good schools who have modelled effective practice. All of the classrooms have a range of stimulating displays which provide useful information to support pupils' learning; for example, 'working walls' which provide helpful reminders to pupils about punctuation and the use of interesting vocabulary in writing, and guidance in effective problem solving in mathematics. Displays around the school also encourage learning, often showing pupils' own work, which is well presented and skilful.

Strengths seen in teaching during the inspection includes teachers translating their high expectations of what all pupils can achieve into well-focused activities that build incrementally on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils discuss and further refine their own ideas by discussing them with partners and other pupils; for example, when using adverbial adjectives and trying out different calculation methods to solve problems in mathematics. Learning is best in lessons where teachers model good writing and use other interesting resources to enliven pupils' learning; when teachers increase the demands made on pupils when they have mastered a skill because of timely checks that are made as lessons proceed; and when teachers set higher expectations in the quality and quantity of work, so that there is not a ceiling put on what pupils can achieve. A recent visit to a good school by some teachers is helping them to develop their questioning skills and extend the range of tasks and activities they provide for pupils of different abilities. Teachers' marking is insightful, and careful use of the time given to pupils to make corrections helps them to improve their work.

Teaching does not quickly and effectively move pupils' learning on when tasks are uninteresting or not meeting the particular learning needs of specific pupils well enough. Although marking of pupils' work provides comments for improvement, there are insufficient model examples given to pupils to help them. There are also not enough high-quality challenges set in marking for more-able pupils to help them think and apply their understanding and skills more deeply. Increasingly, pupils are using their literacy skills across different aspects of the curriculum but there are few opportunities for them to use their numeracy skills other than in mathematics lessons.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Observations during this inspection indicate that pupils are confident to tackle tasks in lessons and they respond well to instructions. They show resilience in persisting with demanding work and are not inclined to resort to low-level disruption in lessons. In the playground, they play happily and make the most of the organised games and activities provided during the lunchtime break. They respond promptly when asked to return to their classes. There are very few fixed-term exclusions and there have been no permanent exclusions over recent years. Pupils' behaviour was very good in the assembly held at the end of the school day. Pupils listened attentively to a story and responded well when invited to reflect on their successes and the importance of perseverance when faced with challenges. In various formal and informal discussions held with them, pupils said that they feel safe and that they value learning about different cultures and people. They clearly show respect for each other, and were polite and welcoming to the inspectors.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The headteacher has high expectations of staff and pupils. Together with other senior staff, she regularly checks on standards of teaching, the quality of pupils' work and rates of pupils' progress. The invitation to teachers to reflect on, and evidence how they are improving teaching and learning, is a well-judged strategy. It is enabling staff to be constructively self-critical and support others to work towards the common goal of improving pupils' achievement. The findings from checks on learning and teaching are helping to identify where to target further support. The headteacher and the other leaders provide helpful feedback to staff observed teaching.

A recent external moderation of teachers' assessment of pupils' writing in Year 6 confirmed the accuracy of teachers' judgements. Senior leaders' analysis of how individual and different groups of pupils are making progress across the school is increasingly accurate and detailed. Senior leaders meet with class teachers every six weeks to discuss pupils' progress, focusing on different groups. The headteacher identifies individual pupils who are falling behind but, as a leadership team, follow-up action, such as tracking these pupils during lesson observations and checking their books, is inconsistent.

The school's action plan is reviewed regularly and evaluations of progress towards the priorities identified in it are well founded and honest. An external review of governance carried out by a National Leader of Governance has resulted in the formulation of an action plan. It has the right priorities to help improve governance. The local authority has provided training to help governors understand pupils' performance data, although not enough governors attended this session. Governors receive information about pupils' performance, including that of pupils for whom the school receives extra government funding (pupil premium) and this helps governors

to assess the impact of spending decisions. Governors are currently in the process of auditing their skills and are keen to fill the gaps identified through future governor appointments.

Parents are kept informed about the school's work to bring about improvements. A parents' forum provides opportunities for dialogue and communication between the school and parents and carers.

External support

The local authority is responsive to the school's needs. It provides a range of support to improve the quality of teaching through the partnerships it has arranged with another local school. Half-termly visits by the school improvement adviser provide robust challenge and hold the school leaders to account for securing improvements.