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Christine Hall
Headteacher
Broadfield Primary School
Windmill Road
Hemel Hempstead
HP2 4BX

Dear Mrs Hall

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Broadfield Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 9 September 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 was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in September 2013. 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 the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Hertfordshire.

Yours sincerely

John Daniell
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Ensure that teaching is good or better, so that all groups of pupils make at least good progress and their attainment rises in mathematics and writing in Key Stage 2, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - improving teachers' use of assessments, so that tasks in lessons are sufficiently challenging for all ability groups and work is closely matched to pupils' needs
 - ensuring that pupils always receive feedback on their work that gives them very clear information on what they need to do to improve
 - ensuring that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive support appropriate to their individual needs.

- Improve leadership, management and governance by:
 - developing the expertise of those teachers who lead subjects and key areas to monitor effectively the quality of teaching and pupils' progress
 - determining how effectively the school spends its pupil premium funding and the impact this is having on those who are known to be eligible for free school meals
 - undertaking an external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 9 September 2014

Evidence

I met with you and the deputy headteacher, two members of the special educational needs team, a group of pupils from Years 2 to 6, the Chair and four other members of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. I reviewed the progress the school had made in addressing the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. You accompanied me to three lessons in which we observed teaching and pupils' progress, and I visited a number of lessons briefly to look at children's work. I also scrutinised the school's records of recruitment checks on staff.

Context

Since the previous inspection, a significant number of teachers have left the school and all have been replaced. You have introduced a new post of assistant headteacher. You have created a specialist team of staff to meet the needs of those children who are disabled or who have special educational needs. A new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in January 2014.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

You have made effective progress against the actions identified in your school improvement plan because you have rightly focused on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching. You acknowledged the need to add to the capacity at senior leadership level by appointing an assistant headteacher who will have oversight of the revised primary curriculum. You have started to strengthen the leadership of subject leaders by enlisting the support of the local authority to provide appropriate development and training. Senior leaders have become much more astute at monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the work of the school. This includes monitoring the performance of different groups of pupils and gathering a wider range of evidence to produce an accurate profile of the quality of teaching over time and the impact this is having on improving pupils' outcomes. You have also made effective use of the physical education and sport premium funding, and your monitoring systems demonstrate the positive impact this funding is having on raising pupils' sporting performance.

Members of the governing body have continued to respond positively to the external review of governance and have made good progress against the actions identified in their own improvement plan. They have an increased understanding of the quality of teaching in the school and have an improved awareness of the impact of initiatives which are specifically targeted at those pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding. They ask searching questions at meetings in order to get the answers they require.

Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- Pupils' progress has accelerated across the school at a more rapid rate, including for those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium. These pupils made progress at a more rapid rate than others in the school in 2014.
- The performance of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is tracked more rigorously, and reports to the governing body are made on a regular basis. The impact of this funding is measured for each individual pupil and governors regularly receive detailed information on successful strategies.
- The quality of marking has improved since the previous monitoring visit. There are many more examples of teachers writing helpful comments and of more pupils responding to these in a meaningful way, which demonstrates they are making progress and learning from their mistakes.
- Leaders are clear about how they will assess pupils' progress within the revised primary curriculum.
- There has been an increased emphasis on the importance of writing in the school and I saw many good examples of longer extracts of creative writing.
- You are acutely aware that a large turnover of teaching staff can have an impact on the quality of teaching, but have been rigorous in your recruitment of new teachers and have conveyed your high expectations well to new members of staff.
- The new special educational needs team is well informed about the new arrangements for children who have special educational needs and they complement each other well. They work well with teachers to develop their understanding of the needs of individual pupils who require additional support.
- Pupils' attendance has improved significantly. Those pupils with whom I met spoke positively about the school and enjoy coming to school.
- You have continued to develop ways of involving parents and carers in the education of their children. Your Parents' Council, for example, gives parents the opportunity to express their views about the school.

Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs underachieved in 2014 because the work and improved approaches of the new special educational needs team had not had time to show impact.
- The legacy of underachievement among the older pupils, particularly those now in Year 6, has not yet been totally eradicated. This is due to these pupils experiencing weaker teaching in the past. This group of pupils is not yet attaining at a high enough standard, particularly in writing, although their rate of progress is accelerating over time.
- Although teachers' assessments of pupils' performance in Year 6 were externally moderated and judged as accurate in 2014, these were not matched by pupils' performance in their Year 6 Standard Assessment Tests (SATS). Pupils had not been adequately prepared in how to tackle questions

under examination conditions. You have made this a priority for the pupils who are currently in Year 6.

- Not all subject leaders are able to demonstrate the impact they are having within their areas of responsibility to a similar degree because their experience of leadership is variable.
- Although all teachers have been provided with detailed information about the revised primary school curriculum and are delivering the new curriculum, the curriculum policy has not yet been updated to reflect these changes. This is a priority for leaders and governors.

External support

The support provided by the local authority is having a positive impact in tackling the school's weaknesses. The Hertfordshire Improvement Partner visits the school regularly to offer an appropriate level of challenge and support. Regular termly meetings to check on progress against the school's improvement plan and the local authority's statement of action ensure that the school remains on track to achieve the targets laid out in its plans. The teaching and learning adviser from the local authority has worked well with teachers on the delivery of phonics (the sounds letters make). The special educational needs team welcomes the guidance provided by the local authority in helping them to map out the provision for pupils eligible for special educational needs support.