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Mrs Naomi Shrimpton
The Headteacher
Longford CofE (VC) Primary School
High Road
Britford
Salisbury
SP5 4DS

Dear Mrs Shrimpton

Special measures monitoring inspection of Longford CofE (VC) Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 7 and 8 October 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 October 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 not making enough 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 Diocese of Salisbury, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Wiltshire.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2014

- Eliminate inadequate teaching and ensure that teaching across all year groups is consistently good, by:
 - developing teachers' knowledge about the topics and subjects they are teaching
 - ensuring teachers plan work which challenges each pupil to move their learning forward quickly in lessons, with deadlines for the quantity and quality of work they are to complete
 - ensuring teachers acquire a clear understanding of how to accurately assess pupils' progress and how to use this information to adapt questioning, explanations and tasks during the lesson, particularly for the most- and least-able pupils.
- Improve the pace and consistency of pupils' progress for all groups and across the key stages in order to raise standards in writing, particularly at Key Stage 2, by:
 - giving pupils more frequent opportunities to write
 - ensuring that pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their writing and that their targets are readily available and used to focus their efforts
 - ensuring pupils have the time and opportunity to improve their work based on accurate and constructive feedback in teachers' marking expecting pupils to work at the highest levels they are capable of in lessons.
- Seek more effective interim measures to support the few pupils with poor behaviour so learning is not disrupted.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance and middle leaders, in taking responsibility for identifying key issues and quickly bringing about improvements, by:
 - evaluating the performance of pupils, including the most- and least-able and those eligible for support through the pupil premium, and identifying any key issues and then implementing solutions rigorously
 - monitoring the quality of teaching to identify good practice that can be shared across the school
 - ensuring the curriculum takes better account of different ages and abilities in each class
 - ensuring teachers provide pupils with opportunities to undertake some learning outside of school time
 - ensuring the governing body develops more effective and accurate ways of checking and comparing the school's performance against other schools nationally to better hold leaders to account.

An external review of governance to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupils' premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the third monitoring inspection on 7 and 8 October 2014

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised documents, including curriculum plans and teachers' planning. He held meetings with the headteacher, the Chair of Governors and other representatives of the governing body, pupils from the school council and representatives from the local authority, the Diocese of Salisbury and a National Support School. The inspector also spoke informally with pupils at lunch time and with parents at the start of the school day.

Context

The new headteacher took up her position on 1 September 2014. The building of a school hall and kitchen was finally completed during the summer holidays.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Pupils' achievement within the school remains inadequate. The end of year assessments in July 2014 for children in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 confirm pupils are underachieving throughout the school. Underachievement in writing and mathematics, in particular, is because pupils are not receiving consistently good teaching and, consequently, most are failing to make good progress. Although the current Reception children are settling well overall to learning, results from the previous year show there are significant gaps in the youngest children's personal, social and emotional development. As a result, they are not well prepared for the next stage in their learning. In other year groups, the most able, those eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, and those identified with specific learning difficulties are not receiving the personalised support they deserve.

Teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons are generally set too low and so work set by the teacher often does not challenge or motivate pupils sufficiently. End of Key Stage 1 results signal that pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly in line with age-related expectations. Pupils frequently lose concentration in lessons and so their learning falters. For example, in a mathematics lesson there was not enough challenge set for the more able pupils in the doubling of numbers and in a literacy lesson where the text for some pupils was too easy.

A similar pattern of underperformance due to a lack of focused teaching was found in the Key Stage 2 class. The 2014 end of year assessments confirm that by the time pupils completed Year 6 their attainment in reading was in line with the national average but writing and mathematics was well below the national average.

The quality of teaching

The quality of teaching requires significant improvement if gaps in pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics are to be eradicated. Teachers in the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes face a particular challenge in having to plan for multiple ages as well as a broad ability range. However, class sizes are well below those typically found in primary schools. Pupils' low achievements indicate weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge, particularly in mathematics, and in not matching tasks sufficiently well to the learning needs of individuals. In addition, teachers are not offering learning experiences that makes learning irresistible or that provide for the specific learning needs of those pupils who require additional support.

Teachers are not demonstrating enough accuracy in assessing pupils' progress. Consequently, they do not use such information to adapt questioning, explanations and tasks during the lesson, particularly so for the most- and least-able pupils. The often slow pace of learning, as seen in a Key Stage 1 phonics lesson, too often holds pupils back. Consequently, they do not make enough progress and gaps in their achievement remain. In a Key Stage 2 science lesson, a lack of practical resources meant pupils were unable to fully investigate air resistance using spinners and differing weights. The planning for this lesson did not seek to develop pupils' thinking or investigation skills.

The new headteacher has devised plans to address the professional development needs of teachers. Some training on how the marking and feedback teachers provide to pupils can be used to support pupils' next steps in learning has already taken place. However, a review of pupils' books by the inspector shows the training is not consistently applied by all teachers.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning in lessons have deteriorated since the previous monitoring inspection. Teaching is too often interrupted by low-level disruption such as calling out, chatting and not paying attention to what the teacher is saying. This poor behaviour is because the activities given to pupils to complete are not always set at the right levels to engage them in meaningful learning. Pupils who spoke with the inspector said, 'Some pupils behave badly but the teachers handle it very well.' Pupils all agreed they felt safe at all times in school and were very excited to have a new outdoor play trail, a new school hall with apparatus and hot dinners now cooked on the premises. Most pupils behave well in and around the school and show respect towards one another and adults. Pupils articulate a strong sense of responsibility to others, saying they understood why they could not use the new play apparatus until further safety checks had been carried out.

The school takes its safeguarding duties seriously and continues to work closely with external partners to improve the overall attendance of pupils. There are no recorded incidents of serious bullying currently in the school's log books. The school's website contains the necessary information on how pupils eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, receive additional support. However, insufficient information has been made available to parents on the website about what is in the taught curriculum.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The arrival of the new substantive headteacher has been enthusiastically welcomed by parents, staff, pupils and governors. In the short time she has been in post, the headteacher has quickly gained an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has set high expectations for staff as well as pupils, and has rightly identified the need to secure consistently good teaching throughout the school as her main priority. The school improvement plan has been amended to reflect this priority. The headteacher is also wisely drawing on the expertise of external agencies and partners to bring about these necessary improvements. For example, the headteacher has drawn on the expertise of the diocesan representative to help strengthen teachers' ability to improve the quality of pupils' writing skills. Teaching assistants play an essential role in supporting pupils' learning and the headteacher has encouraged them to become more involved in the vision setting and life of the school through attending staff development and training sessions. However, teachers are not always deploying other adults to best effect in lessons which limits their effectiveness overall.

The Chair of Governors continues to work tirelessly to bring about the necessary changes in leadership and management and has succeeded in strengthening communication channels with the school and the local authority. He has begun to gather around him other highly committed governors who are determined to bring about improvements in the school as quickly as possible. Governors understand the need to introduce a greater urgency in reviewing teachers' performance and are impatient for improvement. Training undertaken by governors in recent months is enabling them to develop more effective and accurate ways of checking and comparing the school's performance against national expectations. As a result, governors are now beginning to ask more insightful questions of leaders and hold the school more effectively to account. For example, a governor with an interest in special educational needs has recently visited a national support school to gain a clearer understanding of how the most vulnerable pupils can be supported in classes.

External support

Following the previous monitoring inspection, the local authority has reviewed its involvement with the school, clarified its role with the governing body, and proposed actions and who will be responsible for monitoring these. The local authority is now exercising a greater determination and urgency to bring about the essential

improvements the school requires. The school continues to receive effective support from the Salisbury diocese and a national support school to improve the quality of teaching. For example, teachers have visited the national support school to observe teaching. So far the impact of these visits has only been partly successful and leaders acknowledge greater rigour in monitoring teachers' performance is required. The mentoring of the new headteacher and the newly qualified teacher is being provided by the local authority and the national support school