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Mrs Linda Hatcher
Acting Headteacher
Rose Hill Primary School
Derby Road
Ipswich
IP3 8DL

Dear Mrs Hatcher

Special measures monitoring inspection of Rose Hill Primary School

Following my visit with Pete Sewell, Associate Inspector, to your school on 5 and 6 November 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 making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

The school may appoint one newly qualified teacher (NQT) to the Key Stage 1 department before the next monitoring inspection. The phase leader will be expected to act as mentor and a governor will be responsible for overseeing the induction and development of the NQT.

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 Suffolk Local Authority.

Yours sincerely

Tim Bristow
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - lessons interest pupils and engage them in their learning
 - teachers make the best use of teaching time and learning moves at a brisk pace
 - teachers use challenging questions to extend pupils' understanding and strengthen their knowledge.

- Raise achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that progress is at least good in all year groups in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - teachers having high expectations of handwriting and the presentation of work
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length in different subjects
 - ensuring that teachers provide work which matches pupils' abilities so that it is neither too hard nor too easy.

- Improve communications with parents and carers so that they are fully informed about all aspects of school life.

- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders and managers are more sharply focused on improving pupils' attainment and progress
 - linking the judgements made on the quality of teaching with the progress pupils make in lessons
 - further developing governing body actions so that they rigorously hold leaders to account through additional training in monitoring and evaluation of pupils' data linked to the main issues in the school development plan.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the third monitoring inspection on 5-6 November 2014

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher, governors, pupils, other members of the school leadership team and a representative from the local authority.

Context

Seven teachers took up post in September of which four have leadership responsibility. A deputy headteacher has been appointed on a temporary contract until April 2015.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Assessment results in 2014 show that standards by the end of Year 6 overall were similar to last year. However, they are now below average because the gap has widened between the performance in school and the national average. These results reflect a legacy of inadequate achievement over the last few years. The exception to this trend was the marked rise in standards in English grammar, punctuation and spelling. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics rose to average overall.

School assessment information this term indicates that in each year, pupils are making better progress than last year in reading, writing and mathematics. This is also the case for different groups of pupils. Disadvantaged pupils are making similar progress to the other pupils.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage the assessment on entry of individual children has been carried out accurately. Activities to build on each child's developmental needs have been devised and signs of the success of these activities are evident. For example, children who were identified as being unable to count from zero to five are now able to do so, whereas those who could count to 20 are now doing simple addition and subtraction.

Achievement in reading is being helped by the better teaching of phonics. Weaker readers are using phonics skills automatically to help them with their reading.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are often supported well, but insufficient attention is paid to checking the impact of this support on their progress.

The quality of teaching

The progress of pupils is accelerating because the teaching is improving. In Years 5 and 6 teachers are demonstrating that they are more proficient at providing pupils with work that is appropriate for them and then checking the progress that they make in lessons. This improvement is replicated in Years 3 and 4 and also Key Stage 1, but progress here is not as consistent as it is in Years 5 and 6 because there are still some very weak features of teaching which hinder the progress made by pupils.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is also improving, but teaching assistants sometimes miss the opportunity to ask questions that would enable children to further develop their speaking, listening and counting skills.

Most teachers have been conscientious in meeting the marking requirements of the school. Pupils spoken to were enthusiastic about how helpful they found this to be. However, teachers are still not using the knowledge gained from pupils' work to plan the next steps in their learning as well as they should. This is particularly the case for the most-able pupils. These pupils often do not receive work that stretches them.

Some very skilled teaching assistants work effectively with pupils. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 reading lesson, the teaching assistant moved from pupil to pupil asking pertinent questions that really helped them to improve their work. However, teachers do not manage the teaching assistant's time as well as they could. There are times when all the teaching assistant has to do is to listen to the teacher talking to the pupils.

Teachers are working hard to improve their teaching of mathematics. Calculation strategies are taught more effectively. Generally, pupils were observed trying hard to solve calculations. Teaching problem-solving is still a challenge for the teachers. Often the word problems that pupils have to solve are too simplistic and do not require the pupils to use problem solving or reasoning skills.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The attitudes of pupils continue to strengthen. Pupils spoken to are aware of one or two pupils who do not work hard enough in lessons. However, it is evident that their view that behaviour in lessons is much improved is an accurate one. This is also the case outside lessons and in the playground where the management of behaviour and bullying is much improved. Some pupils are still concerned that lunch time is not supervised as well as it could be. However, they are confident that misbehaviour is dealt with fairly.

The quality of leadership and management of the school

The acting headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, communicates high expectations to staff and has demonstrated determination and success in strengthening teaching and leadership. She has proved extremely resilient in dealing with the difficulties and challenges that have been presented to her and is building a promising team and firmer foundations for the future of the school.

The new phase leaders vary in experience, but are enthusiastic and have many ideas for improving teaching that they would like to implement. However, their lack of experience of leadership in a school that requires special measures means that they have not made it a priority to work alongside their team in lessons or to observe them teaching so that they understand the weaknesses that remain. Consequently, they are not in a position to decide what action they need to take to improve the teaching in their phases. This understanding is critical if they are to have the necessary impact on improving teaching and learning.

The school has been successful in providing a variety of opportunities to include parents in the work of the school and in strengthening communication with them.

Governance is now much more effective. They have a good strategic understanding of how the school needs to improve and they carefully check that the actions being taken by school leaders are contributing effectively to school improvement. One sensible strategy has been the development of links between named governors and phases so that governors can keep a careful check on the impact of the work of the new phase leaders.

External support

The governors and the local authority have strengthened their partnership. The local authority provides appropriate support as necessary and has also carried out a helpful review this term. The review gave some useful recommendations about leadership and governance. The recommendations made about teaching and achievement are appropriate, but are not always precise enough to make clear where in the school the recommendations for improvement need to be directed.