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5 December 2014

Mr James Wilson
Acting Headteacher
Chickenley Community Junior Infant and Nursery School
Princess Road
Chickenley, Dewsbury
West Yorkshire
WF12 8QT

Dear Mr Wilson

Special measures monitoring inspection of Chickenley Community Junior Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 3 and 4 December 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 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 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 Chair of the Governing Body and the Director for Children and Adults for Kirklees.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Brown
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to be at least good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers accurately assess what pupils already know and can do so that learning activities are well matched to the abilities of different groups of learners
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve and that pupils produce written work at the levels of which they are capable
 - increasing the pace of learning in lessons and ensuring that pupils have enough time to complete their work
 - ensuring that comments in teachers' marking always show pupils exactly what they need to do in their work and that pupils respond to these comments
 - providing clear and consistent expectations for behaviour in lessons.
- Raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics so that pupils achieve well in these subjects by:
 - ensuring that reading sessions are always tightly focused on developing specific comprehension skills
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to engage in writing activities for longer periods with a focus on accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation
 - providing pupils with regular and systematic opportunities to develop key number facts, and using these to improve their ability to solve mathematical problems.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - ensuring that priorities for improvement are based on accurate evaluation of current performance
 - providing training for senior leaders in how to monitor the quality of teaching thoroughly and effectively so that they can advise teachers on how to improve their practice
 - ensuring that teachers use information on pupils' performance effectively and are held to account by school leaders when pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are not good enough
 - providing training for the governing body so that all members fully understand their role and are able to challenge all leaders on how well pupils are doing and the quality of teaching in all phases of the school
 - undertaking an external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the quality of teaching and governors' understanding of the school's use of the pupil premium, in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and governance may be improved.

Report on the third monitoring inspection on 3 to 4 December 2014

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, including teaching and learning. A range of documents were scrutinised as well as work in pupils' books. The acting headteacher and other senior and middle leaders, groups of staff, pupils, a small number of parents and members of the governing body were spoken with. Meetings were also held with a National Leader for Education who is supporting the school, professionals who are working in the school providing help from partner schools, including the lead professional from the Primary Pupil Referral team (PRU). The inspector spoke with a member of the trust who oversees the school and representatives of the local authority.

Context

Since the last inspection an acting headteacher has taken up post. A new teacher is in post and a new leadership structure has been put in place. One deputy headteacher and an associate deputy headteacher have been appointed but have not yet started on a full-time basis. Three vacancies exist which are currently filled by a number of long- and medium-term supply staff. Additional staff and parent governors have been appointed to the governing body.

Achievement of pupils at the school

School leaders do not have a clear picture of the achievement of all pupils. This is because the information about the progress pupils are currently making in Key Stage 2 is not secure. Previous assessments made about what pupils could and could not do were inaccurate. School leaders have, however, been rigorous in making sure that teachers' assessments are now valid. The school now has much more accurate information of what pupils need to do to improve but not on how well they have progressed over time. As a result, there are insufficient data available for current school leaders and governors to assess the quality of teaching and the impact it is having on learning. In addition, they cannot accurately gauge the impact that actions to improve teaching have had.

Recent results from national tests for Year 6 pupils in the last academic year for mathematics, reading and writing show that too many pupils do not reach the required standards. In addition, too many pupils have not made the progress expected of them. Where secure evidence does exist about the progress pupils are currently making, it suggests that the rate of progress in reading and mathematics is improving but not quickly enough to make up for previously slow rates of progress.

In Early Years Foundation Stage the school has implemented an effective system to track the progress the children are making. This shows that most children are currently making the progress expected of them. The proportion of those reaching a good level of development has declined and is still too low.

In the most recent teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics continues to improve and is catching up with national expectations. The proportion of pupils who go on to achieve above national expectations is still too low. The number of pupils who can effectively link letters with the sounds they make by the end of Year 1 is below national expectations for six-year-olds. This situation improves by the end of Year 2 with better progress being made than seen nationally.

The quality of teaching

Evidence seen during the inspection suggests that, where staffing has been stable, the quality of teaching is improving. Marking and feedback are now more consistently used in all classes with more effective systems for checking pupils' work and giving them feedback. As a result, pupils are clearer about the next steps they need to make to improve their work. In addition, pupils have more chances to use and apply what they have learnt in literacy through extended pieces of writing and they benefit from activities that now better match their needs. Pupils' learning is further supported by teachers' better use of questioning in lessons to extend pupils' thinking. As a result, more pupils are engaged with their learning and the work in books shows that more pupils are now making the progress expected of them. Pupils say they now enjoy their lessons more. These improvements are not yet seen consistently in all classrooms. In addition, opportunities for pupils to talk about and test out their learning in new situations are limited and misconceptions, in mathematics for instance, are not always challenged. As a result, the progress pupils are currently making in Key Stage 2 is not rapid enough.

Systems for holding teachers to account and tracking pupils' progress are sharper with a tighter focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. For example, targets set for teachers to measure their performance are now more directly linked to school improvement priorities. Teachers are better at using data to inform their planning and more work is being done to ensure that the assessments teachers make are always accurate. In Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 teachers have a clearer understanding of the progress pupils are making and the need to plan lessons which engage and motivate pupils of different abilities.

The lack of accurate teacher assessment data in Key Stage 2 makes it difficult to see if the improvements in teaching are making a difference over time and therefore to evaluate the quality of teaching effectively. This is because data cannot currently be analysed in enough detail about those making expected or better than expected progress for different groups of pupils and it is, therefore, difficult to compare the progress of these groups.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Evidence seen on this inspection suggests behaviour in classrooms and around the school is improving but needs to improve further. The need to restrain pupils physically or refer them to the 'inclusion room' following serious incidents has decreased. This is because new systems and training have been put in place to help

staff better support pupils and avoid confrontations. Support for key workers has been improved and additional staff now supervise playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils and parents say that the school is a safer place but their concerns still persist about occasional violent outbursts, standards of behaviour and bullying. School leaders have also reviewed the support given to staff and pupils and now engage more widely with local services and families to provide more effective support.

Teachers and support staff say that behaviour has improved in lessons and that they are much less frequently disrupted. Pupils recognise these improvements but state that 'things are far from perfect' and there is 'still some way to go' before they feel that behaviour is acceptable. Observations made during the inspection noted that in lessons where activities were well matched to pupils' needs, pupils were well engaged, with good levels of concentration. Where pupils were not engaged with their learning they became distracted but tended not to interfere with the learning of others.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Leadership at all levels in the school is now clearly focused on delivering improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. The leadership team and staff now have a renewed conviction to improve the school so that it is removed from special measures when the school is next inspected. This is because the acting headteacher, since starting in post, has worked quickly to implement a range of actions to refocus on and improve the quality of teaching across the school. In addition, new leadership structures are in place with clearer roles and responsibilities identified and there is greater accountability for all teachers. New systems to monitor the implementation of agreed actions and policies are now robust and followed through promptly. Teachers are clearer about the expectations made of them. Systems to tackle poor performance of teachers and provide support to help improvements in pupils' learning are sharper. There is now the necessary drive and focus being brought to the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. However, given that the school was not making enough progress towards the removal of special measures at the time of the last monitoring inspection, recent improvements are not yet secure or sufficiently embedded to make up for lost time. Furthermore, continuing staff changes mean that school leaders will need to ensure that the improvements that are now evident are implemented quickly and consistently by all new staff if the current momentum is to be maintained.

Governors are increasingly effective in holding school leaders to account. This is because they know the school well and have increased their presence in and around the school. New committees have been put in place to focus on the areas that require improvement. Governors understand the challenges the school now faces and have built their capacity with the appointment of additional governors with appropriate sets of skills to meet them. Parents and staff are now better represented. The trust has raised concerns about how the governing body has been constituted. This matter requires clarification and resolution as a matter of urgency to ensure the long-term stability and oversight of the school.

External support

The support from an outstanding school and a National Leader of Education continues to provide proportionate and well-targeted interventions. The link has been strengthened with the secondment into the school of the current acting headteacher.

The local authority continues to monitor the school closely. Additional support from the PRU has been effective in reducing the number of serious incidents in the school and providing support for staff. The school now works more closely with a range of external agencies to provide support for pupils and families where needed. The local authority is confident that the governing body has been correctly constituted.