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23 January 2015

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 to your school on 21–22 January 2015, 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 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

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body
- Local authority
- For the Secretary of State use the following email address:
CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk

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 third monitoring inspection on 21–22 January 2015

Evidence

HMI observed the school's work, looked carefully at a range of school documents and met with staff, a group of 12 parents, pupils in Years 4 and 6, four members of the governing body including the Chair and the Vice Chair and a representative from the local authority. HMI observed teaching in all classes accompanied by the headteacher and looked through some books for pupils in Years 5 and 6.

Context

One part-time and two full-time teachers have been appointed from September 2014.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Pupils' achievement is improving. They are making quicker progress than in the past, which means that a greater proportion of pupils are attaining the standards expected for their age. The 2014 provisional unvalidated national test results show that pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with national averages. The rates of progress made by the pupils have also accelerated. The 2014 results show that by the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly in line with national figures. This is a significant improvement on the 2013 results.

The school has worked hard to narrow the gaps between the attainments of groups of pupils. The pupils in receipt of additional funding (pupil premium) from the government to boost their learning left the school in 2014 with greatly improved results. For example, the gaps in reading and mathematics narrowed significantly between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school. However the gap in writing, although narrowing from 2013, was still around half a year behind. Similarly, disadvantaged pupils made much better progress than they have done in the past. But compared to all pupils nationally, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils making the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average.

Senior leaders recognise that within an overall better picture in achievement, many more pupils are not making better than expected progress. The 2014 national test results show that the more able pupils made the slowest progress in writing from their different starting points. Information from teachers' current assessments of pupils' progress indicates that the most-able pupils' progress is not secure enough across all year groups. In writing, pupils of all abilities, including the disadvantaged pupils, need to catch up if they are to make better than expected progress. In the lessons observed during this inspection, coupled with a check on pupils' work in

literacy and across the curriculum, the evidence is that pupils' progress is improving but not quickly enough. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length to enable them to practise and hone the skills that they use in their daily literacy lessons.

A detailed analysis of the specific needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is giving leaders a good view about where there is current underachievement. These pupils' achievement remains mixed, as reported in the last monitoring inspection.

The quality of teaching

Pupils' improved results in the most recent national tests reflect the improvement to teaching. Effective teaching is also being increasingly secured across other year groups. In all classes, relationships are strong between adults and pupils. Teachers regularly make checks on pupils' learning and progress. When this information is used effectively it helps to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills systematically over time. In some lessons seen during this inspection, pupils were quickly moved on to deeper learning because of teachers' accurate assessments. Equally, teachers spent time with those pupils who needed to consolidate their learning. Teaching assistants seen made a full contribution to pupils' successful learning because of detailed dialogue with class teachers, using their clear understanding of how well pupils were learning.

Accurate assessment also makes sure that teachers are aware of the progress of different groups of pupils. Teachers have responsibility for bringing this information to pupil-progress meetings with senior leaders and accept responsibility for the progress pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics. A significant change since the last monitoring inspection is that from these meetings, teachers have a clear sense of how to move individual pupils' learning forward. Further improvements to the marking of pupils' work are helping to make learning better. An agreed marking code is helping pupils to play a greater part in identifying exactly what needs to improve. Consequently, they make good use of time set aside for them to respond to teachers' marking. Pupils are aware that they have to apply the writing skills learnt in English lessons to their topic work. Teachers use the same marking code so that it helps pupils to experience consistency in their learning.

Pupils learn well and are enthusiastic in lessons that have a practical element. For example, pupils were seen to be fully engaged in a lesson where they had to use their computing skills to write a set of commands. In another lesson, they showed their imaginative skills in designing and making wind turbines. In discussions with the inspector, pupils expressed their enjoyment of learning when they are asked to find things out and present their work using a range of media. They also like the variety of tasks given for homework.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons. Disruptions to learning are very uncommon. Their conduct around the school and in the playground is usually respectful and well-mannered. They are polite to adults around them and, in discussions with the inspector, said that they feel safe in school. Parents who met with the inspector praised the work done by the school to help pupils to be aware of risks and how to stay safe. Bullying is uncommon. Pupils say that when 'friends fall out' the matter is quickly dealt with by adults because pupils have confidence to report their concerns. The school is consciously raising pupils' awareness of what it means to grow up in modern Britain and the need to show respect for religious and cultural diversity. Last year there was a rise in the rate of persistent absence. This was partially due to medical reasons. Where absence is unjustifiable, the school takes prompt action. The most current data show a drop in the rate of persistent absence since the start of the 2014 academic year.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The headteacher provides decisive leadership in the pursuit of higher standards in teaching and learning. Because she delegates responsibility, other leaders are increasingly rising to the challenge of securing sustainable improvements. The deputy headteacher is leading on English and has a clear grasp of weaker areas in pupils' achievement, such as in writing. The mathematics leader has accurately identified the underachievement of particular groups of pupils and how the gaps in their learning can be closed. Leadership for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is determined to support teachers and additional staff to tackle underachievement. There is purposeful use of training. When teachers visit other schools to help improve their practice, leaders make sure this is managed well and leads to improved teaching.

The school has adjusted the curriculum since September 2014 to meet new requirements. This is giving other subject leaders an opportunity to check on how well pupils are learning through planned topics.

Parents who met the inspector pointed out the vast improvements made to communications between the school and them. They like the range of communication, the openness of staff to deal with any concerns raised and the improvements made to their children's learning.

The quality of governance has improved further. Governors are now asking for information and visiting the school to gain first-hand evidence to help them make decisions. As a result, the quality of challenge and support is improving. The appointment of two new governors is strengthening the work of the governing body.

External support

The local authority has made a useful contribution to improvements in teaching and learning through input from advisers and consultants and brokering links with other schools. The impact of support is checked on regularly by the school's link advisers. Support is adjusted and agreed with school senior leaders so that it is suited to the changing needs of the school.