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5 March 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 with Stephen McMullan, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 3–4 March 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 fourth 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 appoint up to two newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection to any one year group, as required.

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/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – (including where a school is an academy)
- 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 fourth monitoring inspection on 3–4 March 2015

Evidence

Her Majesty's Inspectors observed the school's work, looked carefully at a range of school documents and met with staff, groups of pupils from all classes, three members of the governing body including the Chair and the Vice-Chair, and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors observed teaching in all classes, two of which were jointly carried out with the headteacher, and inspectors looked through pupils' workbooks.

Context

There have been no important changes at the school since the last monitoring inspection.

Achievement of pupils at the school

The school's most-recent data on the achievement of current pupils indicate that the improvements in the pupils' progress noted at the previous inspection are being sustained in Years 5 and 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Although, pupils' progress in reading and mathematics in Years 3 and 4 is improving, it is not as strong as it is in the upper Key Stage 2. However, school leaders have set ambitious targets for pupils' progress to speed up. Since the last inspection, pupils are getting more opportunities to write at length across the school. This is bringing about improved achievement, and for pupils, a much greater enjoyment of lessons. The school's tracking data shows that disadvantaged pupils currently in Year 6 are making slightly less progress in reading, writing and mathematics compared to their peers. In other year groups, the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school in these subjects is at risk of widening because the overall progress of pupils has improved.

The quality of teaching

Teaching continues to improve. Teachers' use of questioning is increasingly effective in extending pupils' learning. Since the last inspection, a concerted effort to improve the quality of pupils' extended writing skills has increased, with more positive results. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, inspectors saw pupils making good progress in developing the quality of their writing about the experience of being a fighter pilot during the Second World War. The subject interested them and they structured their writing well, using a planning tool to help organise their ideas. Pupils went on to improve the quality of their own writing further by working effectively with their classmates when checking each other's work. Similarly, in a Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils relished the opportunity to create an extended piece of writing for a competition, making good use of their prior knowledge and understanding. They thought carefully about the vocabulary and other writing techniques to enthral the

reader. Across all year groups, there is consistency in the way writing is taught and in the quality of feedback given by teachers. Pupils have time set aside to respond to, and act on, teachers' comments.

Some weaknesses in teaching are still evident. Not all teachers are using the information they already have about what the less-able pupils know, understand and can do, to pitch learning at the right level for these pupils. The impact of teaching assistants to accelerate pupils' progress is mixed. They support pupils well to complete tasks, but their role in extending or deepening pupils' knowledge is less effective.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are responding positively to the school's higher expectations of their performance. Pupils' attitudes and commitment to their work are strong. Pupils respond to teachers' marking, showing diligence and maturity. Pupils' behaviour around the school and in the playground is usually good. They share play equipment well and readily take responsibility for putting items away without fuss. Care is shown for the school building, and adults in the school are respected. The dining hall is left tidy after lunch. Pupils are polite and welcoming, and happy to talk about their achievements and enjoyment of school. For example, they were animated when explaining what they were coming dressed up as to mark World Book Day.

The rate of attendance is higher currently than for the same period last year, reflecting successful work in tackling the lack of attendance of the most persistent absentees. Pupils arrive to school punctually and come prepared to learn. They continue to feel safe and well cared for. In discussions with the inspectors, pupils gave examples of how they had taken responsibility for helping other, potentially vulnerable, pupils by taking the initiative to organise lunchtime activities for them.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The senior team is working effectively in keeping the school focused on its key priorities. Leaders continue to have a precise understanding of pupils' achievement through their routine scrutiny of pupils' progress and observations of lessons. Leaders know where the differences are between subjects, groups of pupils and year groups, and they adjust actions being taken to tackle weaknesses identified. So, for example, teachers are increasingly adapting work better to meet the specific learning needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

Subject leaders are clear about their roles and have suitable action plans that are linked to whole-school priorities for improvement. They are enthusiastic about supporting their colleagues' work to implement the new curriculum. Equally, these leaders are committed to checking pupils' progress and to take appropriate action to tackle underachievement. Impact so far shows that the more-able pupils are

sustaining their improved progress in reading and mathematics. However, there is still some way to go to secure better than expected progress across all year groups, particularly in writing. Pitch of work at the right level of difficulty for the less-able pupils also needs more rapid improvement.

Senior leaders' checking of learning through lessons and pupils' work provides feedback to teachers which they find helpful in continuing to make improvements. There is an established culture in the school to secure improvements to pupils' learning which is shared by all staff, including teaching assistants. The training to improve the quality of teaching is valued by staff.

Teachers make sure that writing skills are used and practised by pupils across the wide range of interesting topics. Pupils learn how to stay safe through their personal, social and health education programme. They learn about different religions in lessons, assemblies and in their celebrations of festivals. The school actively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are lively displays of pupils' experiences of meeting and visiting people from various religions and backgrounds. Pupils respond to opportunities they are given to have their say. Pupils play a full part in the school council and believe that they are listened to, and that it makes a difference to their lives in school.

The school uses the primary school sports funding imaginatively to maximise its benefit for all pupils, particularly for girls. Staff skills are being developed to increase their level of expertise in teaching physical education lessons and in providing interesting extra-curricular clubs, such as cheerleading and Zumba. These clubs are attracting previously reluctant participants and making a positive impact on their health and well-being.

Governance continues to improve. Governors appreciated the refresher course on the school's pupils' performance data provided for them recently by the school's local authority adviser. They are using their understanding to make checks on how the expenditure of the pupil premium funding is helping disadvantaged pupils to catch up with other pupils in the school and all pupils nationally. Governors meet regularly with the headteacher to review progress against the priorities set out in response to the last full inspection of the school. They make visits to add to their understanding gained from the headteachers' reports to them about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Governors ask searching questions of leaders and are ambitious for the school.

External support

External support from the local authority is making an important contribution to school improvement. Examples include support for teachers to help moderate pupils' writing, and helping with the teaching of mathematics for the lower-attaining pupils.

The school is reducing its reliance on external support as it becomes increasingly able to manage its own development.