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Rashida Sharif
Interim Headteacher
Nansen Primary School - A Park View Academy
Naseby Road
Birmingham
B8 3HG

Dear Mrs Sharif

Special measures monitoring inspection of Nansen Primary School - A Park View Academy

Following my visit with Pippa Jackson-Maitland and Wendell Gopaul, Additional Inspectors, to your school on 24–25 February 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 April 2014. 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.

I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

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 Trustees, the Chair of the Local Governing Body, the Academies Advisers Unit and the Director of Children's Services for Birmingham.

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Make sure that all leaders and managers keep pupils safe and prepare them for life in modern Britain by:
 - ensuring that pupils understand how to deal with all types of bullying
 - working with other agencies to make sure that pupils recognise the dangers and risks associated with extremism and radicalisation
 - implementing a programme of religious education that helps pupils understand the main beliefs of all major religions
 - making sure there is a suitably qualified person to administer paediatric first aid.

- Make sure that the governing body fulfils its legal responsibilities by:
 - having fair and transparent recruitment processes
 - ensuring equal opportunities for staff and pupils
 - making sure the academy provides a broad range of subjects for all pupils
 - providing effectively for pupils' cultural development
 - improving the management and checking procedures of the academy's finances.

- Ensure teachers improve their teaching and raise pupils' attainment, particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, by:
 - making sure that leaders check on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make
 - checking that teachers' marking helps pupils improve their work
 - insisting that teachers take account of what pupils already know and understand when planning activities, especially for the more-able pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs
 - making sure that teachers always spell words correctly
 - making sure that pupils spell correctly, use grammar and punctuation appropriately and write legibly
 - using information about pupils' achievement to check carefully how well different groups of pupils are learning
 - using assessment information to identify pupils' needs more quickly
 - appointing a full-time and qualified special educational needs coordinator.

Report on the third monitoring inspection on 24–25 February 2015

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the interim headteacher, the executive principal, other senior leaders, a representative from the board of trustees, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Local Governing Body, the headteacher from Nelson Mandela Primary School and the Birmingham Prevent and Resilience Officer. Inspectors spoke informally with parents. They considered the responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, and took account of 57 staff questionnaire responses.

Context

At the end of the autumn term, the trustees appointed a new interim headteacher. She joined the school in January 2015. At the time of this inspection nine classes were being taught by temporary teachers.

The headteacher and assistant headteacher from Nelson Mandela Primary School and the headteacher and senior leaders from Arden Primary School have provided a reduced level of support for teachers and teaching assistants at Nansen since January 2015. The decision to reduce this support was taken by the newly appointed interim headteacher.

As reported previously, the trustees have appointed a full-time and qualified special educational needs coordinator and ensured that qualified staff administer paediatric first aid.

Achievement of pupils at the school

The improvements in pupils' achievement evident during the November 2014 monitoring inspection have not been sustained. Standards remain low in reading, writing and mathematics. In most year groups, work in pupils' books shows that rates of progress have slowed, with pupils making insufficient gains in knowledge and skills. The most able pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs are not making the progress of which they are capable.

Significant weaknesses remain in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar. As reported previously, pupils do not apply and develop their writing skills across different subjects. Some teachers do not plan regular sessions to develop pupils' reading skills. Year 6 pupils told inspectors that they often finish work from other lessons instead of practising their reading. Pupils are not consistently provided with mathematical activities that build on what they already know.

In a few classes in Years 1, 2 and 4, rates of progress continue to improve because of some stronger teaching. For instance, inspectors saw examples of pupils' writing that was correctly punctuated, made sense, and was well presented.

Senior leaders do not check pupils' progress frequently enough. Consequently, they do not have an up-to-date understanding of how well different groups of pupils learn.

The quality of teaching

Teaching has not improved. It is weaker than at the time of the full inspection in April 2014, when it was judged to require improvement. Teaching is now inadequate. As a consequence, pupils do not make sufficient progress. There are a number of reasons why teaching has not improved. The interim headteacher reduced the support from staff at Nelson Mandela and Arden. As a result of this decision, teachers have not received enough training and guidance since January this year. Additionally, the procedures for checking the work of staff have weakened. Senior leaders have not provided individual teachers with regular and precise advice on how to improve their teaching. Teachers told inspectors that they would appreciate the opportunity to work alongside highly effective teachers and to observe good practice.

Teachers do not use the information they have about pupils' attainment and progress to plan suitable activities. The most able pupils are often asked to complete activities that lack sufficient challenge. In contrast, the activities for pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are too difficult. Teachers' expectations of how much pupils can achieve in a lesson are low. In one example, pupils were allowed to spend most of their time drawing a picture rather than completing the written part of the planned activity. Teachers do not ensure that lessons start promptly. Inspectors observed pupils in some classes taking up to 10 minutes to return from the playground and get ready to work. As a result, valuable learning time is lost.

Presentation in pupils' books has not improved. Pupils scribble, reverse numbers and letters, and produce untidy, careless work, especially in Years 5 and 6. Teachers' marking remains inconsistent across classes and subjects. Teachers do not always expect pupils to correct their errors. As a result, pupils do not improve their work and continue to make the same mistakes. Inspectors found a few instances of teachers' written marking that contained grammatical and spelling errors.

There are some emerging strengths in teaching. For example, some teachers asked questions skilfully to check pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. They provided pupils with helpful guidance and made sure that pupils were clear about what they were expected to learn by the end of the lesson.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour has deteriorated and is now inadequate. It was judged to require improvement at the time of the full inspection in April 2014. During the monitoring inspection, inspectors observed older pupils running and shouting in corridors. Members of staff told inspectors that pupils as young as eight years of age hit them, and senior leaders fail to take appropriate action. The majority of staff who completed the Ofsted staff questionnaire raised concerns about pupils' behaviour. Pupils told inspectors that name calling, particularly racist name calling, is a regular occurrence. Some pupils stated that they do not report incidents of racist name calling because staff do not do act on their concerns.

In lessons, most pupils are keen to learn and listen carefully to adults and each other. However, teaching fails to capture the interest of all pupils. A significant minority of pupils, especially boys, misbehave. Some pupils choose not to work or follow the teachers' instructions, and whisper to each other instead of listening to adults and focusing on their work.

Senior leaders do not keep accurate records of incidents of misbehaviour or the actions taken in response. Consequently, they do not know when and how often different types of misbehaviour occur.

Some parents who spoke to inspectors raised concerns about the safety of their children. They were particularly concerned with the number of times their children were coming home with bumps and bruises. Inspectors' observations of pupils in the playground substantiate parents' concerns. Pupils, especially older boys, were observed hitting, punching and thumping each other in the playground. During the first day of the inspection, pupils were not always adequately supervised in the playground.

Pupils' attendance remains below the national average for primary schools. The current system of rewards for encouraging pupils to attend regularly is not working. Pupils' attendance has declined further since the monitoring inspection in November 2014.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Leadership has weakened. The school is in an extremely fragile position. Senior leaders have not raised pupils' achievement or improved the quality of teaching. The trustees and the executive principal have not kept a close enough check on the work of the interim headteacher. Consequently, some decisions made by the interim headteacher have not been in the best interest of the pupils. For instance, while resources are needed to support pupils' learning, almost £7,000 was spent on refurbishing the headteacher's room and a meeting room.

Staff morale is low. Some of the staff who spoke with inspectors raised concerns about poor communication between the interim headteacher and staff. Some staff stated that they felt 'fearful' of the interim headteacher and 'unsupported'.

The previous interim headteacher and trustees changed the leadership structure of the school and reduced the number of assistant headteachers. They reviewed and revised the roles and responsibilities of the assistant headteachers and gave them responsibility for overseeing the work of different year groups. The assistant headteachers are keen to lead improvements, but are inexperienced. The executive principal acknowledges the need to provide them with support and training.

The teacher with responsibility for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has led and organised training for teaching assistants so that they can provide these pupils with additional help. She has also organised a range of external support for pupils with specific learning needs. While this is helping some pupils to make the progress they should, many continue to make insufficient gains in their learning. This is because class teachers do not consistently plan activities which meet the learning needs of pupils who have special educational needs.

The teacher with responsibility for the curriculum has provided staff with suitable guidance. However, teachers do not have enough time allocated for teaching subjects like history and geography. Consequently, pupils are not developing the necessary skills and knowledge in sufficient depth.

Pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain and their understanding of different faiths and cultures are insecure. These aspects are not taught well. For example, pupils do not know enough about democracy or issues such as tolerance and respect.

The members of the newly formed local governing body have started to attend a range of training events. This is helping them to develop a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The information that senior leaders share with the local governing body is not clearly presented. This is making it difficult for them to fulfil their duties and check the difference senior leaders are making to pupils' achievement and teaching. The executive principal is planning to meet with the interim headteacher at least once a week and check the impact of her work and that of senior leaders, and to report his findings to the local governing body and the trustees.

External support

The pace of improvement in the school is too slow. The trustees have not provided enough challenge to senior leaders or kept a close enough check on their work. This has had a detrimental impact on pupils' achievement and teaching. The trustees and the executive principal fully accept that urgent action is required to strengthen

leadership and teaching. The trustees are finding it difficult to recruit effective teachers and leaders, and are in the process of developing a recruitment strategy.

Trustees have organised suitable training for members of the local governing body. Staff with specific responsibility for keeping pupils safe are benefiting from their regular meetings with one trustee and the Birmingham Prevent and Resilience Officer. This is helping staff to ensure concerns relating to safeguarding pupils are reported promptly to external agencies. The trustees have arranged an external review of pupil premium expenditure. The local governing body is planning to discuss the findings of this review at its next meeting.