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12 March 2015

Mrs Chris Dey and Mrs Jackie Glover
The Interim Headteachers
Woodlea Primary School
Atholl Road
Whitehill
Bordon
GU35 9QX

Dear Mrs Dey and Mrs Glover

Special measures monitoring inspection of Woodlea Primary School

Following my visit with Clive Close, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 10 and 11 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 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 of Children's Services for Hampshire.

Yours sincerely

Siân Thornton
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 secure rapid progress for all groups of pupils, particularly at Key Stage 1, by ensuring all teachers:
 - receive training to help them understand the capabilities of the groups of pupils they teach and how to use assessment information well, so that they can plan appropriate learning activities
 - plan interesting activities that reflect pupils' interests and aptitudes so that they commit to learning and behave consistently well in lessons
 - plan activities in lessons that follow on logically so that there is a clear development in the way pupils learn about new ideas and they can build on what they know
 - explain what pupils will be learning in simple language so that all pupils can understand what is expected of them
 - develop their questioning skills so that they gain a better understanding of how well pupils are learning and adapt lessons accordingly, depending on pupils' responses
 - set pupils targets and involve them in checking on their progress so that they understand how to improve
 - provide opportunities for pupils to follow up on teachers' guidance in the marking of their books so that they learn by making corrections to their work.
- Raise pupils' attainment by:
 - ensuring pupils practise blending the sounds made by different letters consistently so that they can read unfamiliar words successfully
 - giving pupils effective opportunities to write about their own ideas at length
 - providing mathematical problems that allow pupils to calculate answers for themselves
 - ensuring children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given imaginative activities and can interact with adults who encourage them to explore their ideas further by themselves.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - introducing a rigorous monitoring schedule so that senior leaders can more accurately evaluate the effectiveness of the school
 - ensuring senior leaders enable middle leaders to check the quality of provision and outcomes in their areas of responsibility
 - making sure middle leaders analyse the information they gather to determine priorities for improvement and produce action plans to address these priorities
 - assessing children's current levels of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this information to plan relevant activities that meet all children's developmental needs

- ensuring senior leaders hold staff to account for using information about pupils' progress to plan effective lessons that have a positive impact on pupils' learning
- ensuring governors receive all the information they need and that they use this more effectively to hold all leaders to account.

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 fourth monitoring inspection on 10 and 11 March 2015

Evidence

Inspectors observed teaching in every classroom and looked at pupils' work. Meetings were held with the interim headteachers, other leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body with two other governors, a representative of the local authority, teachers, and a group of pupils. Parents' views were gathered through conversations at the school gate. There were too few responses to the on-line survey, Parent View, for these to be considered. A range of documents was scrutinised, including information about pupils' achievement, leaders' evaluations of the school's improvement, the school's records of checks on teaching, information relating to safeguarding and pupils' behaviour, governors' records and local authority reports.

Context

One of the interim headteachers has continued in post from last term. The other has returned to the school for this term, having served previously in this role. Governors have appointed a permanent headteacher to start at the beginning of the summer term. There has been a change of job-share teacher in Year 1. The governing body has five vacancies.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Pupils' progress throughout the school continues to improve, most consistently from Year 3 to Year 6. Pupils in Year 1 are now making rapid progress. In Year 2, while pupils are making better progress, many still have considerable gaps to close. In Reception, despite some signs of improvement, children are still making too little progress to prepare them well enough for Year 1.

Throughout Key Stage 2, the school's assessments, and work in exercise books, show that rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics continue to improve, with increasing proportions of pupils on course to achieve at least the expected standard when they are aged 11. However, the quality of pupils' work and the amount pupils produce is variable, especially in the wider curriculum where pupils take less pride. Opportunities for pupils to write at length had developed well at the time of the last monitoring inspection, but these have declined again since then, especially in subjects other than English.

The local authority has validated the school's current assessments. These indicate that in Year 6 things are improving. This year, the proportion of pupils likely to attain the expected levels is on track to increase in mathematics and writing compared with 2014, but not in reading. The school expects larger proportions of pupils than in 2014 to attain the higher than expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's assessments show a significant increase in the proportion of pupils in Year 6 on track to make at least the expected progress since they were in Year 2.

The school expects all results in Year 6 to at least match the national figures for 2014 (the latest available national information), and in most cases to exceed them.

The school's assessments show that, in summer 2015, pupils in Year 2 are likely to achieve at levels broadly similar to 2014 in reading, writing and mathematics. This reflects limited improvement at the end of Key Stage 1 for the school. However, these results are likely to be above the national average. They would mark better progress during Year 2 for some pupils from their low starting points in September, but still not good enough progress over the whole of Key Stage 1.

In Years 1 and 2, current assessments of pupils' learning of phonics (the sounds letters make) indicate that results at the school in the national summer screening activity are likely to remain below the national average. The school has identified pupils at risk of under achieving and is providing extra teaching to boost their progress.

In Reception, while children are now more settled in an increasingly purposeful environment, their learning remains too limited. Furthermore, the school's systems for assessing and recording progress during Reception remain significantly under developed. This limits adults' ability to plan appropriate next steps for groups and individuals. As a result, the school is unable to provide a reliable indication of children's likely achievement by the end of the Reception Year.

The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is improving. However, limited analysis of these pupils' progress means the school is unable to say whether this is rapid enough to close any gaps between their achievement and that of their classmates.

Pupils throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 are increasingly aware of their targets and next steps, especially in Key Stage 2 and Year 1. As a result, most pupils approach their learning with increasing focus and determination, especially in English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

Teaching continues to improve throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. In Reception, while some improvement is apparent, this has not been enough to raise the quality of provision sufficiently.

Teachers' marking and feedback to pupils have improved further, and pupils are now in the habit of reading and responding thoughtfully to their teachers' helpful comments. Nevertheless, teachers do not all check well enough pupils' responses or the accuracy of any additional completed work.

All teachers now set out clearly for pupils what lessons are about, and how pupils can check their own success. In most classes, pupils were clear how to use this

information to help them do well, but this was not as established in Year 2, where some pupils still need to develop their listening skills and concentration.

In Reception, the activities provided for children to explore their learning now have greater purpose and link together more sensibly. The way that adults interact with the children, especially when asking questions to stimulate the children's interest and understanding, has also improved. However, the improvement made is limited and adults still do not assess and record children's progress accurately enough to plan the next learning adequately.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Teachers have taken the initiative to develop pupils' understanding of the best behaviour for successful learning. Discussions have been held in class and the best ideas promoted in assembly. This is further supporting pupils to think about their next steps and take more responsibility for the standard and quality of their work.

Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour has become calm and sensible during lessons and pupils of all ages now play well together and show respect. Pupils told inspectors they increasingly enjoy school. Reception class parents are rightly delighted that their children are settled and happy at school, due to the consistent care they now receive from staff. Correctly, parents of older pupils are now overwhelmingly confident that behaviour is good and that any previous concerns have been resolved.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The interim headteachers have taken effective action to resolve staffing issues. They are leading coherent work to develop systems for assessing and checking pupils' progress in the revised National Curriculum. They have ensured the continuing cohesion of the staff team, pending the arrival of the new, permanent headteacher. However, senior leaders have not maintained a sharp enough focus on the progress of children in Reception towards a good level of development, or pupils in Years 2 and 6 toward the expected standards.

Senior leaders have continued systematically to check teaching, reporting their findings to staff with appropriate guidance about any action found necessary. This has recently included a full survey of how well teachers set out for pupils the intended learning and how pupils can check their own success.

All staff have maintained a firm focus on completing tasks in the school improvement plan, and much has been accomplished. However, when checking this work, senior leaders have not looked closely enough to see if actions have improved pupils' learning, and particularly whether the school is on track to meet the achievement targets agreed with the local authority. When evaluating the school, senior leaders have not considered well enough the quality of provision in the Reception class.

The assistant headteachers have continued to develop their roles, working diligently across wide responsibilities. As special educational needs coordinator, the assistant headteacher, who is Key Stage 2 leader, has ensured better identification and diagnosis of pupils' special educational needs. This has resulted in a more accurate register of these pupils and better targeted support. As English coordinator, the assistant headteacher, who is the Key Stage 1 leader, has maintained an effective focus on tracking pupils' progress in phonics. Consequently, pupils needing additional support have been identified more promptly, and relevant training provided for teaching assistants. Leadership of early years remains unclear.

Regular meetings between the interim headteachers and each class teacher to discuss pupils' progress are now well established, and teachers are expected to prepare thoroughly. However, while the Key Stage 2 leader attends these meetings in her role as the special educational needs coordinator, the Key Stage 1 leader does not, limiting the impact of this role on raising standards in the school.

Recent recruitment has strengthened the governing body, with all elected roles now filled. Aware of the need for rapid improvement in all its operations, the Chair of the Governing Body is actively seeking to recruit further members with appropriate skills and experience. Due to changes in personnel, governors currently lack a sufficiently accurate understanding of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.

External support

The local authority continues to provide effective support for improvement in teaching and the special educational needs provision. Intensive support for early years teaching, provided by local authority consultants and through partnership with a successful local infant school, has had some positive influence, but has not made enough impact overall. The area manager has continued to provide valuable support and challenge by ensuring sustained interim leadership, supporting the governors in their successful recruitment of a new headteacher and providing valuable analysis of pupils' achievement for the monitoring inspection. The local authority regularly reviews the school's improvement, but recently this has not made enough impact on leaders' work.