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24 March 2015

Mrs Jane Grecic
Headteacher
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St Helens
Merseyside
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Dear Mrs Grecic

Special measures monitoring inspection of Lansbury Bridge School

Following my visit to your school on 23 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 recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in December 2014.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, a national leader of governance, teachers and pupils. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plan were evaluated. A range of other documentation provided by the school was scrutinised, including leaders' self-evaluation of progress since the inspection and records of governing body meetings. Several classrooms were visited to observe learning.

Context

Following an external review of governance, the governing body was reconstituted on 17 March 2015. Since the section 5 inspection five additional governors have been appointed to fill the gaps in experience and expertise identified in a governors'

skills audit. A new Chair of the Governing Body, with extensive leadership experience, has been elected.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Leaders have taken swift action to make better all of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Procedures have been strengthened to ensure pupils are safe in school. Leaders have purchased commercial systems to measure and track pupils' progress. Teachers are now able to identify accurately what pupils' already know, understand and can do. The ability of the governing body to hold leaders rigorously to account has been bolstered by the appointment of new governors with specific skills in areas such as finance, logistics, data analysis and special educational needs. The quality of teaching across the school is showing signs of improvement because adults' use of appropriate communication strategies, along with teachers' feedback to pupils, are being applied consistently well.

Leaders' urgency and determination for improvement are reflected in the school's action plan. Leaders' have worked effectively with the local authority to produce the action plan which is linked closely to the local authority statement of action. The school action plan is lengthy but gives an accurate picture of the actions required to improve the school rapidly. While measures to be used by leaders to evaluate their actions are included in the action plan, a summary of key actions along with specific progress measures would be helpful for all staff so that individuals can be clear about how they contribute to improving the school. The local authority statement of action gives a clear picture of how the local authority School Improvement Board (SIB) will evaluate the school's progress. However, the statement of action should be strengthened by the inclusion of how and when the SIB will report their evaluation of the school's rate of progress to registered parents.

All staff have either received, or have an appropriate date set, for training in how to keep children safe. Likewise, leaders have taken swift action to ensure all adults have received suitable training in how to manage challenging behaviour including the use of an agreed approach to physical intervention. Leaders have introduced a comprehensive training log for all adults in order to record training which has taken place and to identify accurately when additional training is required. The school's single central record has been further strengthened due to the inclusion of records relating to disbarring by association. Leaders are aware, however, that they must manage appropriately the risk posed by infrequent visitors or short-term volunteers. The school's policy on the use of safeguarding risk assessments requires updating as a matter of urgency. Leaders are also aware that they must prioritise the review of all behaviour management plans so that any reference to the use of locked rooms to

manage behaviour is not at odds with current school practice or the most recent statutory guidance.

Leaders have quite rightly concentrated on ensuring teachers have a solid base from which to improve their teaching. Teachers have received training in how to set appropriate targets for individual pupils' progress. Consequently, teachers plan activities which are precisely matched to pupils' specific needs. Adults were observed using effectively the whole school communication strategy to ensure each planned activity contributed to boosting pupils' progress. However, overall progress cannot be evaluated, as systems to measure and analyse attainment have not been fully embedded.

Leaders have worked well with an external consultant to introduce a new marking policy. Pupils spoken with understand the system used by teachers to mark their work. Pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Leaders' own records show that teachers are applying the system consistently well across the school. Although evidence in pupils' books shows some progress as a direct consequence of teachers' constructive feedback, it is too early to judge the overall impact of the revised approach to marking and assessment.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's action plan is fit for purpose.

The school may appoint newly qualified teachers (NQTs) before the next monitoring inspection. The school may appoint up to a total of three NQTs with a maximum of one NQT to teach in any Key Stage.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for St. Helens and as below. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Drew Crawshaw

Her Majesty's Inspector