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Aileen MacMillan
Acting Headteacher
Buildwas Primary School
Buildwas Road
Buildwas
Telford
TF8 7DA

Dear Mrs MacMillan

Special measures monitoring inspection of Buildwas Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 3 June 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 January 2015.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the acting headteacher and other leaders, governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, a local authority representative, and the local leader of education (LLE) who is supporting the school. I briefly visited classrooms and spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plans were evaluated. I also reviewed the school's records and documentation relating to various aspects of safeguarding and considered the responses from 11 staff questionnaires.

Context

No staff have left the school since January. One of the existing teachers has been appointed as the leader responsible for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Two governors have resigned and the governing body is in the process of replacing them.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

You, other leaders and governors are showing a tangible determination and commitment to improve the school as quickly as possible. You have produced an action plan that is focused on the key areas for improvement identified at the inspection and contains appropriate actions. It dovetails well with the local authority statement of action.

The inspection report identified urgent actions needed to ensure that the school's systems for keeping children safe are robust. You have addressed these promptly and effectively. The school site is now secure and the arrangements for checking visitors to the school are appropriate. Thorough records are now kept regarding child protection and exclusions. Fire drills take place regularly and are recorded. You have taken on the role of teacher responsible for looked-after children and will receive training for this soon.

One of the existing leaders has taken on the additional responsibility for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. She has acted swiftly to ensure that these pupils receive the support they need to make better progress. Teaching assistants are now allocated to classes where there is the greatest need, rather than being spread evenly. As a result pupils who have a statement of special educational needs are now receiving the support they are entitled to.

You have put in place systems to check that teachers' assessments of pupils' achievement are accurate and consistent across the school. Teachers are now using the resulting information to plan the next steps in pupils' learning so that they can make better progress.

The school now uses an effective system for collecting, analysing and sharing records of pupils' progress. These records show that more pupils are now making better progress and that progress and attainment are likely to be at least in line with national averages at the end of this school year in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6.

Leaders have established a programme of monitoring to check on the quality of teaching and are using this to identify the support and training staff need to improve their practice. You check carefully that this support is leading to the desired improvements and as a result the quality of teaching is starting to improve.

You have provided very effective support and guidance to subject and other leaders. These leaders are developing an accurate understanding of the priorities in their areas of responsibility and the skills needed to lead the improvements. Leaders have benefited from opportunities to undertake joint monitoring with the LLE and subject specialists from the local authority. You recognise the importance of continuing to develop their skills in order to increase the school's capacity to improve further.

A review of the school's use of the pupil premium grant took place very recently. The review identified that since January you have improved the systems for monitoring

and recording the impact of the use of the grant. The recommendations from the report are now to be incorporated into the school action plan.

Governors have embraced the findings of the inspection report and have taken decisive action to address the shortcomings in the school. The external review of governance was arranged swiftly. Governors have used the findings of the review to inform their own action plan to improve governance. A comprehensive programme of training for governors is now in place. Governors make regular visits to observe the work of the school and to meet with leaders. These visits, along with better information from leaders, have empowered governors to be able to provide challenge and strategic direction to the school.

The local authority is providing an appropriate level of challenge and support to the school through regular meetings and reviews. The local authority adviser knows the school well and has arranged a programme of effective and well-focused support including regular visits from the LLE. The staff have benefited from this support, particularly in the development of assessment procedures. The partnership with the LLE and her school is providing extremely valuable opportunities for Buildwas staff to observe good and outstanding practice.

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 not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Mitchell Moore
Her Majesty's Inspector

cc. Chair of the Governing Body
cc. Local authority
cc. The Secretary of State