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2 March 2016

Miss Lucy Sumner
Headteacher
Godolphin Infant School
Warrington Avenue
Slough
SL1 3BQ

Dear Miss Sumner

Special measures monitoring inspection of Godolphin Infant School

Following my visit with Wayne Stannard, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 4 and 5 February, 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 June 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:

Leaders and managers are not taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint NQTs.

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 Slough.

Yours sincerely

Alexandra Butler
Ofsted Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in order that pupils make good progress by ensuring that:
 - children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have stimulating tasks that help them to make rapid progress in developing their basic skills
 - teachers always challenge pupils to do their best, including those who are more able
 - teachers give pupils enough opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills in all subjects, particularly in Year 2
 - teachers check the learning of all groups of pupils more accurately
 - teachers are held to account for pupils' progress.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders at all levels use an effective system for accurately measuring pupils' learning and progress and check the progress of different groups of pupils properly
 - accurate checks on what children can do when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage are undertaken
 - records of assessments of children's progress of all classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide clear information about how well children are learning over time
 - checks are undertaken to ensure all employees have the right to work in the United Kingdom
 - leaders with responsibilities for pupils with special educational needs are fully aware of how these pupils are doing and that they receive effective support
 - training and support is provided for staff in the specially resourced provision so they can accurately monitor how well pupils in the unit are doing
 - governors are provided with detailed and accurate information to enable them to fully understand the school's performance and so hold leaders to account.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the fourth monitoring inspection on 4 and 5 February 2016

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met senior and middle leaders. In addition, the lead inspector met with a group of parents, two governors from the local governing body and spoke to a representative from the local authority by telephone. The lead inspector also met three supporting senior leaders from Baylis Court School. The school's single central record of staff vetting checks was reviewed and a number of other safeguarding checks were undertaken. Inspectors observed lessons in all classes, some jointly with senior staff. Inspectors also met with a group of pupils, looked at pupils' work during lessons and examined a sample of pupils' workbooks.

Context

There have been a number of significant changes since the last monitoring visit. Following an informal working partnership for over a year, the school joined the Baylis Court Academy Trust on 31 August 2015. Several senior leaders from this school provide support. There have been many changes to teaching staff. A new headteacher has joined the school. An additional deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher have also been appointed. Seven out of twelve class teachers have been replaced at least once in this period. Some classes have had two teachers this academic year. One Year 1 class has had many teachers and is currently without a substantive teacher. A significant number of the staff are employed on temporary contracts. Three classes are taught by unqualified teachers. Since the last monitoring visit in June 2015, a different teacher with responsibility for pupils who have special educational needs or disability has been appointed to cover absence.

Outcomes for pupils

The end of year outcomes for Key Stage 1 in 2015 indicate a general improvement in pupils' attainment, although there are some gaps between groups, particularly between boys and girls. The school's current in-year progress measures and the forecast for outcomes in 2016 are misleading. This is because they are based upon the former curriculum and previous assessment systems which are no longer in use nationally. The school has not yet formally agreed how to move forward with new assessment expectations.

Pupils' basic skills in reading and writing are beginning to improve, although this is not rapid enough. Work aimed at the most-able pupils in Year 2 is ambitious and challenging but expectations between equal ability groups in Year 2 are not consistent and so pupils do not have similar opportunities to make good progress. The quality and quantity of writing in Year 1 is too limited and poor handwriting hinders progress.

Teachers are providing more useful feedback on pupils' work, but this is not having enough impact on their next steps. Teachers do not routinely tackle pupils' misconceptions from previous lessons, which slows progress.

The school has responded to the request to establish a baseline assessment for children in early years. Checks regarding what children can do when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage have been completed. However, despite analysing the information obtained, leaders have not taken effective steps to act upon their findings. Some children in the early years have been identified as already falling behind, but plans to support and help them catch up are inadequate. Information about the progress made by children in the early years does not provide clear enough evidence of how well they are learning over time.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching across the school is still too variable. The middle leadership team have worked hard alongside external advisers to ensure there is greater consistency in teaching and learning; however, consistent approaches to teaching, learning and assessment are not yet embedded because of considerable staff changes. The high level of turbulence in staffing has hindered the school's plans to improve the quality of teaching.

Teachers and teaching assistants are able to demonstrate that their training has led to improvements in the quality of phonics (the sounds that letters make) teaching since the last monitoring visit. Pupils now complete activities that are pitched at the appropriate level and, as a result, some progress has been made. Evidence of improvement in phonics provision is clear in some writing books.

Teachers are not making good enough use of the information available to them regarding pupils' prior attainment, progress and their learning needs. Expectations set by teachers in writing lessons are not high enough and class teachers are not sufficiently involved in standardising assessments in pupils' writing books. More confident and effective teachers do not have regular opportunities to share better practice across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Behaviour is good around the school, particularly when pupils move from one activity to another. Pupils are polite, well mannered and respectful.

In less effective lessons, some pupils become restless and their attitudes towards learning decline. This impedes progress in some classes.

Pupils are able to talk about how they keep safe in the school. They are less confident in describing how they can keep safe at home and in the community.

Pupils report little bullying. Parents state that any low-level behaviour incidents are dealt with effectively and promptly by staff.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Recent additions to the senior and middle leadership teams have added capacity to the school. Roles and responsibilities have been identified but a considerable amount of time has been spent on inducting and settling new teachers and supporting them in class. As a result, senior and middle leaders have had limited impact on the overall improvement of the school.

Support staff roles have been reviewed and restructured since the previous monitoring inspection visit. Support staff are now allocated to year groups according to their skills and experience. A teaching assistant now leads the teaching of phonics. Several staff members comment positively on how the guidance they receive improves their own effectiveness.

School leaders have some awareness of the true extent of the current weaknesses. They know that the implementation of the new curriculum and assessment systems need clearer direction. However, senior leaders are not driving improvements quickly enough.

Leaders and those with specific responsibilities for pupils who have special educational needs or disability are not fully aware of how well these pupils are doing.

The school has undertaken sufficient checks to ensure all employees have the right to work in the United Kingdom and this is listed on the single central record.

Governors do not have a deep understanding of the real issues facing the school since the last monitoring visit. Their capacity to challenge all school leaders in appropriate detail is not yet good enough.

External support

The local authority continues to broker the support of an improvement adviser who supports the school. She has recently supported in the 'Launchpad', the resource unit for pupils who have special educational needs or disability. Support has mainly focused upon improving provision in the Launchpad and has not yet had an impact upon outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs or disability.

The school action group, chaired by the local authority, has continued to meet. However, monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. Notes from these meetings are still not clear enough to

shape further decisive improvements and school leaders have not been challenged enough about the pace of change.

The school benefits from support from Baylis Court School, the lead school in the academy trust. Baylis Court School currently provides a teaching and learning coach, a pupil premium champion and a senior leader with expertise in assessment. This support is highly practical and useful, but staff changes have limited its impact. New partnerships forged with local primary schools are supporting the development of some middle leaders and teachers. Overall, external support is not yet having a demonstrable impact on improving the school.