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Harinder Rana
Head of School
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Ealing
London
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Dear Ms Rana

Special measures monitoring inspection of Hathaway Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 22–23 September, 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 May 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 taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The school may appoint up to two 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 Ealing. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Loukes
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching in all classes to raise achievement across the school, by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan learning at the right level for all which builds on what pupils already know and can do
 - teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons are higher, especially for the most able
 - disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language receive the required support to enable them to learn well
 - the marking of pupils' work provides clear guidance on how to improve
 - pupils are routinely given the opportunity to act upon teachers' comments and to make corrections
 - the work teachers set enables pupils to learn well, so they concentrate and do not become distracted and misbehave
 - the activities chosen by children in the Nursery and Reception classes enable them to deepen their learning.
- Raise pupils' attainment throughout the school, including for those supported through additional funding, by ensuring that:
 - pupils are given challenging targets which are regularly reviewed
 - pupils' work is accurately assessed in all classes
 - pupils' progress is closely checked so that any at risk of underachieving are quickly identified and action is taken to secure improvement.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels, by ensuring that:
 - leaders have an accurate picture of children's attainment on entry to and exit from the Early Years Foundation Stage classes
 - staff performance is measured against rigorous targets linked to the quality of teaching and rates of pupil progress, with swift action taken by leaders if progress is not good enough
 - effective systems are established for dealing more quickly with any incidents of bullying
 - there is a rigorous analysis of any incidents of unacceptable behaviour and of patterns of attendance of different groups of pupils to inform actions to secure improvement
 - subject leaders are trained to check effectively on the quality of teaching and achievement in their areas and to hold staff robustly to account for their performance
 - the curriculum is improved to include creative arts subjects
 - pupils have more opportunities to practice their reading, writing, mathematical and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in different subjects
 - the information about pupils' performance shared with parents is accurate.

Report on the third monitoring inspection on 22–23 September 2015

Evidence

The inspector made short visits to each classroom jointly with the head of school to observe teaching and learning, and to scrutinise pupils' work. Meetings were held with the leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and those of English and mathematics. The inspector also met with the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body and two representatives of the local authority. Individual meetings were held with four staff members at their request. Pupils' views and experiences of school were collected through informal discussions and during a meeting with a group of pupils from Year 1 to Year 6. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the central record of recruitment checks, logs of pupils' behaviour and minutes of meetings of the governing body.

Context

The interim headteacher and seven teachers left the school in July 2015, at the end of the summer term. The head of school took up her post in September 2015. Long-term supply teachers have been recruited to fill the teaching post vacancies. The leaders of inclusion, English and mathematics are new to their roles. The school is currently recruiting an additional assistant headteacher. The school is receiving support from leaders at a partner school judged outstanding at its last Ofsted inspection.

Outcomes for pupils

A higher proportion of children reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception year in 2015 than in 2014. This is now broadly in line with the national average. Similarly, a greater proportion of pupils met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check in 2015 than in 2014. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2 increased significantly between 2014 and 2015. By the end of Year 6, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 in reading and mathematics also rose sharply. The proportion of pupils making the expected progress in mathematics and reading between Key Stages 1 and 2 rose in 2015. However, attainment in writing dipped in 2015, as did the proportion of pupils making the expected progress between Key Stages 1 and 2. Following analysis of this data, along with the assessment information relating to pupils in other year groups, leaders' focus is, rightly, on improving outcomes in writing. Despite the improvements in Key Stage 2 outcomes in reading and mathematics, results remained below the government's floor standards (the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress).

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching remains variable, with stronger and weaker aspects evident throughout the school. At its best, teaching is well organised and planned in detail. Consequently, pupils receive work which stimulates and challenges them. The best teaching gives pupils access to the resources they need to help them grasp new concepts. This then enables pupils to apply their learning to abstract contexts. Some teaching routinely includes the posing of questions which require pupils to think critically and apply their knowledge and skills. This enables them to develop a more in-depth understanding of topics. A reflective and analytical approach to teaching leads some teachers to adapt their plans to respond to what pupils have learnt the day before. This means that misconceptions or gaps in pupils' understanding are addressed promptly. In the most effective feedback to pupils, teachers are now more particular about grammatical errors and poorly chosen vocabulary, highlighting text in need of correction or improvement.

Where teaching is weaker, practical resources are not available for pupils to explore and come to terms with mathematical concepts. On occasions, the focus is on the completion of a task rather than on ensuring that pupils understand the associated concepts, and that they have acquired the related knowledge. As a result, pupils do not gain a secure understanding of the topic being taught. Pupils' understanding is sometimes superficial because teaching does not always challenge them to think more deeply about concepts. Short and sometimes one-word contributions to discussions prevent pupils from orally rehearsing what they may later be expected to write. This, combined with the limited opportunities pupils have to reason and explain their thinking, limits the development of their writing skills.

Too often, more able pupils are set tasks which do not stretch them sufficiently. For example, in mathematics, pages of calculations marked exclusively correct suggest that the work did not present any significant level of challenge.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Parents are now contacted at an earlier stage when concerns about pupils' behaviour are raised. As a result, measures to improve pupils' behaviour are put in place promptly so that disruption to learning is minimised. Pupils generally settle quickly at the beginning of lessons so that learning time is maximised. On the occasions when pupils become distracted, they are either not sufficiently inspired by their work or do not have the resilience to ignore the poor behaviour of others. Following a focus on the quality of presentation, pupils are taking more pride in their work, with teachers encouraging them to record their work neatly.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

The turbulence caused by a high number of staff leaving the school at the end of the last academic year had a detrimental impact on the school's rate of progress. However, purposeful and decisive action by the governing body has ensured that the pace of improvement has been picked up quickly. The newly appointed head of school has quickly united the staff team. Staff spoken to during the inspection expressed their trust in her leadership and an appreciation of the clarity of her strategy. Her calm and reflective approach has been welcomed by staff and pupils. She has, rightly, prioritised teaching and learning, as well as the continued development of leadership at all levels. Leaders of key stages are now clear about what is expected of them. They play a greater role in the strategic development of the school in liaison with senior leaders. They are allocated appropriate time and resources to carry out their duties. Clear plans are in place for the newly appointed leaders of English and mathematics to receive the training they need. Support from leaders at the partner school as well as external training courses has been provided.

The local authority and the governing body have confidence in the head of school's leadership skills. Circumstances dictated that during the period of staffing instability the governing body played a more proactive role in the management of the school. It has now, rightly, reverted to carrying out its strategic function, leaving the day-to-day management of the school to senior leaders. The inclusion leader's detailed monitoring of provision and its impact has raised teachers' expectations of what disabled pupils and those with special educational needs can achieve. Staff speak highly of the training and guidance they receive to ensure that the support they provide is tailored to pupils' needs. Schemes of work have been reviewed to ensure that opportunities are planned for pupils to acquire the skills they need to acquire by the end of each year.

External support

The local authority understands the school's needs well. Local authority officers continue to attend meetings of the governing body. The school continues to receive support as part of the local authority's 'Securing Good' programme. Training for leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 has clarified their roles. They are now more proactive in their approach and hold teachers to account for the progress pupils make. Senior staff from the partner school have observed teaching in Years 2 and 6 jointly with the head of school. As a result, the requirements for teachers' planning have been adapted to ensure that a precise and consistent approach is taken to preparing work for pupils of different abilities. Plans are in place for the English and mathematics leaders to work in collaboration with their counterparts at the partner school to develop their leadership skills.