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Anne Perriam
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Dear Mrs Perriam

Special measures monitoring inspection of Vigo Junior School

Following my visit with Clare Morgan, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 4 and 5 May 2016, 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 that have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the fifth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in October 2014. The full list of the areas for improvement that 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 taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The school may appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Farr
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in October 2014

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - all teaching has a clear purpose and that pupils know what they are expected to learn
 - all teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievement, especially the most able pupils
 - teachers make effective use of assessment information in order to give pupils work that contains sufficient challenge, particularly for the most able
 - all teachers give pupils clear advice about how to improve their work and check that pupils follow this advice
 - all teachers check pupils' understanding effectively during lessons and adapt teaching if necessary.
- Improve pupils' progress and results in reading by:
 - ensuring that pupils have more frequent opportunities to read aloud in school so that teachers are able to check how well they are progressing.
- Ensure that leaders and governors act with greater urgency to bring about improvements to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching by:
 - focusing strongly on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress when checking and managing the quality of teaching
 - evaluating the school's performance rigorously and accurately, with due consideration of national minimum expectations of pupils' achievement
 - making certain that the school development plan clearly identifies when necessary improvements are expected to be in place
 - checking the school's progress towards the necessary improvements regularly and rigorously.

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.

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 fifth monitoring inspection on 4 and 5 May 2016

Evidence

During this monitoring inspection, 17 lessons or part lessons were observed, including four jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors met with you, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the English leader and two representatives from the local authority. I also met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body. Inspectors scrutinised school documents, including the school's own information on pupils' current progress, records of leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and local authority notes of visit. An inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day, met with a group of pupils and heard some Year 3 pupils read. The single central record and a range of information about safeguarding were checked.

Context

Since my previous visit, the deputy headteacher, who was seconded to a different school, has now left. A teacher with responsibility for Year 5 pupils is absent. A temporary teacher teaches this class for two days per week and the deputy headteacher from Vigo Infant School teaches for three days per week. The manager of the additional resource provision is absent. The special educational needs coordinator is overseeing this provision.

Vigo Junior School will close on 31 August 2016. Vigo Infant School (on the same site) will become a primary school from 1 September 2016. The executive headteacher who currently oversees both the infant and junior school will become the headteacher of the primary school.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The headteacher continues to steer steady improvement across the school. However, with some changes to teaching arrangements and some instability among staff, progress has slowed since the previous monitoring inspection. Leaders and the governors have invested considerable time and effort to ensuring that preparation for this school's closure and the formation of the new primary school is thorough.

The quality of teaching has improved in some classes and more pupils are achieving the standards expected for their age. Leaders have successfully developed other senior leaders' skills, so that staff with responsibility for literacy, numeracy or special educational needs are systematically improving the teaching of their subjects and are monitoring closely pupils' achievement. As a result, middle leaders are contributing to the improvement in their subjects effectively. They now make

greater use of performance information to evaluate the impact they are having on raising standards. For example, the assistant headteacher has rightly identified that pupils' progress in some aspects of mathematics is slower than in others. Ensuring a sharp focus on improving pupils' understanding of topics such as fractions has ensured that these areas are now strengthening and standards are rising.

Work to address previous deficiencies to pupils' entitlement of receiving a broad and balanced curriculum has not moved on rapidly enough. There is wide variability in the quality of teaching of subjects such as religious education or information and communications technology (ICT). Pupils' experience of such subjects is impeded as these are not taught regularly enough in all classes. Subject leaders do not monitor pupils' performance in these subjects closely enough. Consequently, leaders are unsure how well pupils are performing in subjects other than English or mathematics.

The governing body meets regularly and keeps school performance under scrutiny. Governors are determined that the school continues to improve. Many members plan to join Vigo Infant School's governing body from September 2016 to continue the work that has begun. Governors are aware of some deficiencies in the school's safeguarding procedures. However, discussions are yet to take place to strengthen procedures and ensure that leaders follow the government's guidance meticulously. Shortcomings in administration tasks, such as the gathering of references for prospective employees, means recruitment processes are not yet robust enough.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching in mathematics continues to improve. Teachers now make greater use of assessment information to plan activities that build on prior learning effectively. Teachers plan lessons sequentially, weaving in opportunities for pupils to use their skills in a range of ways, including when solving problems that are more complex. Teachers are appreciative of regular training opportunities and are very positive about their growing skills and expertise. Where teaching is strongest, teachers confidently explain new methods or ways of working to pupils. This ensures that pupils receive clear guidance and quickly grasp what is expected. Teachers reshape or modify tasks with increasing confidence to ensure that pupils move on in their learning appropriately. Pupils are encouraged to reason and explain their thinking more often. As a result, more pupils are catching up and working at the level expected for their age. However, although well-matched tasks meet the needs of lower ability and middle ability pupils, the most-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Sometimes they have to complete work they have already mastered before they can access tasks better suited to their needs. Equally, in some classes, problem-solving activities are too hard for pupils who, because of weak teaching over time, do not have the basic skills needed for success.

Pupils are making steady progress in writing. Presentation has considerably improved over the course of the year and pupils write neatly, showing increased

levels of care. Pupils' handwriting is fluent and legible. The English leader, supported by a local authority officer, has ensured that there are stronger links between pupils' reading and writing. Because of a growing partnership with the school library service, pupils access a greater range of stimulating and appealing reading material. As a result, they are able to utilise a growing technical and subject-specific vocabulary more accurately to improve the quality of their writing.

Some classes have experienced interrupted teaching over the course of the year. In classes where this is the case, such as in Year 5, pupils' engagement in learning has been adversely affected. Some pupils are unsettled and do not address learning tasks with resolve. This causes distraction and prevents others from learning well. During the inspection, both parents and pupils expressed concern about the behaviour of a minority of pupils and the impact this has on learning well.

Recent changes to staffing have slowed the improvements seen at the last visit to the quality of teaching overall.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils attend school regularly and attendance is broadly average. Leaders have continued to ensure steady improvement and the proportion of pupils with low attendance is steadily decreasing. Work to monitor and report on patterns and trends in attendance is at a very early stage. Leaders' monitoring of pupils who arrive late is not as rigorous as it was a few months ago.

Most pupils behave well around the school. Pupils say that behaviour has improved particularly at playtimes. An increasing variety of activities including additional clubs and play equipment are popular with pupils. Senior leaders are energetic in ensuring that pupils behave well on arrival, at playtimes and around the school. However, not all staff share such a high level of attentiveness. When this is the case, standards slip and pupils readily lower their standards of behaviour. There are high levels of staff supervision but on occasion, adults do not spot pupils who may have become upset promptly enough. Greater vigilance is required to ensure that such incidents are resolved more quickly.

The headteacher has led a number of improvements to the school site such as ensuring that some perimeter gates remain locked during the day. A new site manager is beginning to take increased levels of responsibility for this aspect. For example, when inspectors expressed concern about a raised drain cover next to climbing equipment, the site manager was quick to rectify the situation. However, leaders are aware that some shortcomings, such as access to the playground via the main gate, are yet to be addressed satisfactorily.

Where teachers' expectations are high, pupils listen well and are quick to respond to instructions. Pupils understand routines and are quick to comply with what is expected. However, where teachers' expectations are lower, lessons are disrupted

on occasion by the poor behaviour of a minority of pupils. During the inspection, pupils expressed concern about such incidents, noting that it causes distraction and prevents them from learning well. The school has sought help from the local authority but the impact of this support is at a very early stage.

The headteacher has ensured that all required safeguarding policies are in place. However, in recent times there has been some slippage between what is expected and what actually happens. For example, the appointment process of new staff lacks rigour. Leaders do not gather references for newly appointed staff in a timely manner or scrutinise them in sufficient depth.

Although pupils generally listen well, their engagement in their own learning remains underdeveloped. Pupils are happy to try their best and complete activities but in some year groups, they still find it difficult to articulate what they are learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Assessment systems are now much clearer and leaders are ensuring that the information they gather is more accurate. Systems for monitoring the progress of pupils are now much stronger, and there is regular recording of how well pupils are doing. Senior leaders and teachers are able to use this information to identify pupils who are falling behind. Some teachers are using this information effectively in their planning to ensure that tasks are at the appropriate level of challenge, particularly for lower and middle ability pupils.

Work in pupils' books and teachers' assessments show that progress is now steadily improving in most year groups. Pupils are increasing their productivity, completing tasks with greater frequency and accuracy. More pupils, including disadvantaged pupils are working at the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. However, variation persists and in some year groups progress is slower. For example, although standards are rising for all, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is not narrowing quickly enough in all year groups. In addition, there are some variations for groups across the school. For example, boys are attaining less well than girls in writing and girls are attaining less well than boys in mathematics.

Under the strong leadership of the special educational needs coordinator, pupils who have special educational needs or disability are making good progress. Well-judged support is ensuring that these pupils are developing their reading, writing and mathematics skills steadily. Teaching assistants offer helpful support and encourage pupils to do their best. Occasionally, teaching assistants are less effective because their subject knowledge is not sufficiently strong to reshape tasks for pupils who are struggling to understand.

Too few pupils are working at higher levels, particularly in reading and writing.

Teachers do not plan activities that are challenging enough for the most-able pupils. When this is the case, pupils are not challenged to reach their full potential and their progress slows.

External support

Local authority officers meet regularly with school leaders, asking probing questions about how well the school is performing. This is helpful and leaders are becoming more adept at analysing the information they gather. Useful support for the English and mathematics leaders has ensured that these aspects continue to improve. However, work to support the quality of teaching in some year groups has had insufficient impact. Equally, work to support subject leaders in other aspects of the curriculum has yet to make a difference. Consequently, standards, in some subjects, such as religious education or ICT are still too low.