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17 June 2016

Ms Sue Vermes
Rose Hill Primary School
The Oval
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Dear Ms Vermes

Special measures monitoring inspection of Rose Hill Primary School

Following my visit with Louise Eaton, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 7–8 June 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 recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in November 2015.

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

The school's improvement 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 chair of the executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Oxfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Dulon
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in November 2015.

- Senior leaders and governors, working with the local authority, must act without delay to ensure that the school is a safe place for pupils to learn. Actions needed immediately include making sure that:
 - electrical testing is completed on all appliances by an appropriate person
 - fire regulations are met
 - appropriate checks are undertaken on all adults in the school
 - governors and staff receive appropriate safeguarding training, including on preventing radicalisation and extremism.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to accelerate pupils' progress, including in early years, by ensuring that:
 - teachers have higher expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving in reading, writing and mathematics
 - pupils have regular, high-quality opportunities to read widely and often
 - teachers receive useful training to develop their skills and expertise, including in the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make)
 - activities in lessons cater well for pupils' differing abilities
 - teaching assistants develop their skills and expertise so as to have a positive impact on pupils' learning
 - pupils' presentation and pride in their work improve.

- Improve leadership and management to ensure that:
 - leaders use the information they gather to accurately evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses
 - information about pupils' progress is shared and used to inform the school's action planning, including in the early years
 - middle leaders develop their skills in order to play a more active role in evaluating their subjects
 - the curriculum is fully implemented so that pupils receive their entitlement for a broad and balanced education
 - teachers are held to account for the progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics
 - parents are well informed about how well their children are learning
 - provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is strengthened
 - pupils' attendance and punctuality improve.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order 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 first monitoring inspection on 7–8 June 2016

Evidence

Inspectors visited 16 lessons, many jointly with senior leaders. Together with the English and mathematics leaders, they also looked at pupils' exercise books. Inspectors met with senior leaders, middle leaders, representatives from the local authority, a group of pupils and a member of the new interim executive board. Inspectors spoke to 16 parents on the playground. A range of documents were considered, including pupils' progress information, the school improvement plan and the local authority's statement of action.

Context

A Year 4 teacher has left the school. An interim executive board has recently replaced the governing body. The board has not yet held a meeting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Senior leaders have ensured that essential improvements are under way. The school's action plan appropriately prioritises safety and making gains in teaching and learning. Leaders' roles in this, including checking the impact of their work, are clearly defined. Consequently, leaders have taken the right first steps to start to make the school a better place for pupils.

Working closely with the local authority, leaders have taken action to address shortcomings in safeguarding. Electrical testing and fire safety checks have been completed. The record of checks on adults working with children now meets requirements. Governors and staff have received appropriate safeguarding training. The assistant headteacher has taken the opportunity to review safeguarding policies and practice to make sure that pupils' welfare takes precedence. Regular safeguarding briefings are one way that leaders remind staff of their responsibility to keep pupils safe. As a result, staff know what to do if they are concerned about a pupil. Nevertheless, leaders are not complacent. They recognise that there is still work to do to ensure that all systems are rigorous, especially those relating to health and safety checks.

Teaching and learning have greater prominence. Teachers demonstrate a commitment and enthusiasm to improving their practice. Senior leaders are starting to hold teachers to account with more rigour, using pupils' progress information and information from regular checks on teaching and learning. There is a programme of training and support for teachers. Each teacher has had opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills both inside and outside the school. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving. Middle leaders appreciate the new clear roles that they have, as well as the visits that they have made to other schools that are

performing well to learn from established leaders. They are starting to contribute to staff development. However, middle leaders are not yet able to explain the impact of this work on the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. Collectively, leaders are providing much guidance to teachers and gathering ample information about the school's performance. Senior leaders have started to use this, along with pupils' progress information, to evaluate the school's effectiveness. Yet, there has not been sufficient consideration of how to ensure that teachers receive just the right amount of consistent advice or how all leaders can make the best use of this information to plan future developments.

Parents who spoke to inspectors were more positive about the school. Some stated that staff are making a 'huge effort' to be helpful and supportive. Most felt that communication is improving. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs or disability spoke with the greatest confidence about the progress that their children are making.

Leaders have begun to set out their expectations for teachers to provide pupils with an appropriate, broad and balanced curriculum. So far, there has been a greater focus on English and mathematics. For example, teachers are beginning to find opportunities for pupils to practise their grammar, spelling and punctuation in lessons other than English. Nonetheless, there is still much work to do so that pupils receive their full entitlement. For example, leaders have planned for weekly French lessons across key stage 2. Not all pupils say that this is happening. Senior leaders have relaunched the school's values, such as individuality and tolerance, through assemblies. However, it is not yet clear how pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding will be developed across the school.

The review of the school's use of the pupil premium has taken place. Leaders have developed an action plan in response to this. They have increased the focus on disadvantaged pupils and made teachers more responsible for planning how this additional funding is spent. Some teachers have started to produce appropriate plans. However, this is not the case for all pupils and in all classes. Across the school, disadvantaged pupils' achievement continues to be lower than that of their classmates.

The review of governance described the impact of governors as limited because of their overriding support of senior leaders. Although governors asked senior leaders questions, they accepted answers too readily and therefore did not provide sufficient challenge. Consequently, an interim executive board has very recently replaced the governing body.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching is improving because leaders are providing support and some helpful guidance to staff. For example, leaders have set out 'non-negotiables' for teachers to follow, such as making sure that lessons follow a clear sequence of learning. There are now clear expectations about the teaching of reading. Pupils across the school benefit from daily reading and phonics lessons. Leaders have purchased new books, ensured that all staff have had phonics training and made sure that pupils can practise reading regularly either at school or home. As a result, pupils' attainment in phonics is rising in the early years foundation stage, key stage 1 and Year 3.

Where teaching is stronger, activities match pupils' different needs better and teaching assistants provide effective support. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were able to solve number sequences because the teacher ensured that work was just at the right level for different ability groups. Teaching assistants provided further support to pupils who had special educational needs or disability with equipment and carefully worded questions. In better lessons, teachers check pupils' understanding and adjust their teaching to maximise learning. This was evident in a Year 2 phonics lesson. The teacher asked pupils to practise breaking words up into different sounds on their whiteboards and carefully scanned their answers before stopping to address any misconceptions. However, not all teachers demonstrate such skills. Teaching is still too variable, resulting in pupils not making enough progress in some classes.

There is still some work to do to ensure that teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils themselves state that this is lacking in some lessons. One pupil said, 'We need higher standards and more challenges.' In many lessons, activities are not demanding enough, particularly for the most able pupils. This is also evident in the early years foundation stage. Adults do not always make the best use of time and support children to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills. In the Reception classes in particular, activities in the classroom do not prompt children to read or write enough. A lack of high expectations limits the progress that pupils can make.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils' attendance and behaviour have improved. This academic year, there have been fewer exclusions. Absence rates have reduced so that attendance is now similar to the national average. Fewer pupils are late in the morning. This is because leaders are working with other agencies to provide effective challenge and support to families. Pupils appreciate the awards that they receive for good attendance, such as a whole-class cinema trip.

Nevertheless, staff do not all consistently apply the expectations of pupils' behaviour. In some classes, teachers do not ensure that pupils are listening or sufficiently focused on their work. Pupils' exercise books show that they are not yet presenting their work well enough in English or mathematics. In the dining hall, staff do not always ensure that pupils walk, or speak rather than shout. Pupils report that behaviour is still not good enough, despite some improvements.

Outcomes for pupils

Pupils' achievement has risen in some areas. Pupils' attainment in phonics has increased. In Year 3, the large majority of pupils have made good progress to make up for previous underachievement. More pupils in key stage 1 are reaching the standards expected for their age in phonics. In some year groups, including the early years and particularly in Year 6, pupils' rates of progress are increasing because teaching is improving. However, in Year 3 and Year 4, not enough pupils are making sufficient progress. Pupils' attainment across the school in reading, writing and mathematics is still low. There is much to do to ensure that pupils in all year groups reach the standards expected for their age.

Some groups of pupils achieve better than others. Pupils who have special educational needs or disability continue to make progress that is similar to or better than their classmates because they receive effective additional support. Those with English as an additional language achieve better than other pupils. However, disadvantaged pupils are not achieving well enough because they do not yet receive enough extra help. Furthermore, leaders have not identified some groups of pupils such as the most able. There is not sufficient provision within the curriculum to extend and deepen learning, and teachers do not measure whether pupils exceed the standards expected for their age.

External support

The local authority has provided effective challenge and support to the school. The school's intervention leader has provided valuable help to leaders that has kept the improvement plan that matches the local authority's statement of action on track. Both plans were set to conclude in July 2016, in anticipation of an earlier conversion to academy status. Leaders and the local authority have agreed to work together to extend the improvement plan into the new academic year.