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Miss Amelia Haslehurst
Chapel St Leonards Primary School
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Lincolnshire
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Dear Miss Haslehurst

Special measures monitoring inspection of Chapel St Leonards Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 5–6 December 2017, 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 March 2017.

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.

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

The school's improvement plan is not 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 governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Stephanie Innes-Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in March 2017

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - setting out plans which clearly state what actions will be taken to improve the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that all action plans enable leaders and governors to judge more effectively if the actions taken have been successful
 - providing training for all staff to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics
 - developing the role of subject leaders so that they can improve the quality of teaching and learning
 - ensuring that the appraisal process of teachers is more robust
 - developing the skills of the governing body so that governors can hold leaders to account
 - fully evaluating the impact of the funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - evaluating the impact of how the pupil premium funding is used to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that the pupil premium funding is used to accelerate the progress of the most able disadvantaged pupils
 - monitoring and evaluating the impact of the sport premium funding to ensure that all groups of pupils are participating in extra sporting activities.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in key stage 2 by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have the knowledge and skills to teach mathematical reasoning to deepen pupils' understanding of mathematics
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations for pupils' standard of written comprehension to enable pupils to have a thorough understanding of their reading
 - having high expectations for pupils' use of English grammar, spelling and punctuation across the curriculum
 - using assessments more astutely to identify pupils' misconceptions and to address them in a more timely manner
 - developing pupils' writing skills across the curriculum
 - developing pupils' vocabulary in their writing
 - ensuring that the work teachers set provides sufficient and appropriate challenge for all groups of learners, particularly the most able pupils.

- Improve pupils' personal development and behaviour by:
 - continuing to work closely with parents and the local authority to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school, particularly disadvantaged pupils
 - insisting that pupils present their work to a high standard in all areas of the curriculum.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding 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.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 5–6 December 2017

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the interim headteacher, a representative of the local authority and members of the governing body. The inspector also met with a primary consultant and a national leader for education who have been supporting the school. The inspector spoke with groups of pupils and several parents.

Context

Since the inspection, the school has had significant staff changes. The headteacher has been absent since the end of September 2017 and the deputy headteacher was appointed as interim headteacher at the end of October 2017. Several members of staff have left for a variety of reasons. Three teachers are leaving at the end of December. The school has struggled to recruit permanent, full-time teachers. One teacher is on maternity leave. Currently, two classes have part-time teachers and two classes have long-term supply teachers. The school is currently in the process of becoming an academy as part of the Community Inclusion Trust. The trust is currently providing advice and support for leaders and other staff through a primary consultant and two national leaders for education.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The pace of change since the inspection has been too slow. Uncertainty surrounding the position of the headteacher and the high turnover of staff have slowed actions to tackle the areas for improvement identified at the inspection.

Prompt external support from the local authority ensured that a review of governance was carried out soon after the inspection. Since the review, however, several governors have resigned. This has reduced the capacity of the governing body to hold leaders to account effectively and manage the process of the school becoming an academy.

The local authority effectively supported the headteacher to develop clear plans of action for the school. The plans created at that time, however, did not focus sufficiently on the most important priorities that resulted from the school's performance in national assessments in 2017. During the absence of the headteacher, these plans have also not been carried out. Consequently, they are no longer specific or urgent enough to be relevant to the needs of the school.

Subject leaders took part in some training through the local authority to improve their knowledge and understanding of their role. Despite support from the local authority, they have not followed action plans precisely. A scrutiny of pupils' work books and observations of learning show that the work of subject leaders has not made a significant impact on the school.

Effective advice from the trust's primary consultant has led to improvements in the appraisal process for teachers. This is a recent change and has not had enough time to have an impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

An external review of how the school uses the pupil premium funding was delayed and has only recently been carried out. Actions to establish a revised plan are still at an early stage. Leaders have used the primary physical education and sport premium funding to improve the provision for pupils. They have not yet ensured that the use of this funding is accurately monitored and evaluated to ensure that it meets government requirements. A review to evaluate the impact of funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities has not yet been carried out. The local authority recognises that this needs to be completed as a matter of urgency.

The interim headteacher has only been in post full time for a few weeks. She has therefore had limited time to have a significant impact on the improvements needed. She is well supported by representatives from the local authority and the trust. The school, however, has been hampered in planning effectively for improvements beyond the short term. Staff changes and considerable difficulties in ensuring that the school has enough leadership capacity have contributed to the delays. Additionally, the trust has provided early support to the school before the academy process has been finalised. Although well intentioned, the trust's early work in the school sometimes led to confusion between the local authority and the trust as to who is completing or checking the actions taken.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Leaders have begun the process of improving the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, but the impact so far is not clear. Leaders introduced new schemes for the teaching of mathematics and for the teaching of the wider curriculum. Relevant training for teachers for the use of these schemes, however, has not yet taken place. Training for staff has been difficult due to the inconsistencies in the number of permanent staff. Some training has taken place for a leader to improve the teaching of phonics. More is planned for other staff in January and February 2018. The primary consultant has also provided bespoke training for staff. This includes training to improve teachers' monitoring and evaluation of pupils' attainment and progress.

The inspection found little evidence of improvement to the quality of teaching and learning. Observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work books showed inconsistent expectations for pupils' learning. The areas for improvement for English and mathematics identified at the inspection have not been successfully tackled. The quality of teaching and learning in the early years and in key stage 1 has declined.

Leaders have introduced a new approach to tracking the progress of pupils. They are beginning work to improve the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' work. This is in the early stages and has not yet had time to show any impact.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

The overall attendance of pupils has not improved significantly since the inspection. The level of persistent absence remains high, but has improved.

Leaders have improved the procedures for managing attendance since the inspection. Leaders now follow up absences. They emphasise the importance of attendance with parents and offer a range of rewards for high attendance. Leaders have not, however, been rigorous enough in their efforts to review strategies to improve attendance for all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged.

Scrutiny of pupils' work showed that their presentation has not improved. Teachers do not have consistently high expectations for the standard of presentation of pupils' work across different subjects.

Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is not consistently good. In some lessons, the inspector observed very poor attitudes to learning. Leaders are aware of the importance of ensuring consistently high expectations for behaviour. They have not established clear guidelines for staff, however, so that pupils understand what is expected of them at all times, regardless of changes of staff.

Outcomes for pupils

Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 improved in 2017, including for disadvantaged pupils. Attainment in reading improved to above the national average. The attainment of pupils at the end of key stage 1, however, declined in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was below the national average for the second year. Pupils' progress in mathematics has now been well below the national average for five years. The inspector's observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work show very little current evidence of significant improvements. Pupils are not making faster progress since the inspection.

External support

The local authority acted swiftly to support the school after the inspection. It put into place a comprehensive statement of action. Some actions, however, have not been implemented as quickly as expected because of the uncertainty over leadership at the school, staff changes and the involvement of the trust. The trust has provided high-quality, practical expertise and support to enable the school to initiate changes. The local authority has identified that the current leadership is not strong and that significant improvements have not been made to the school. It is working effectively with the trust to ensure that improvement plans are rigorously put in place while the process of the school becoming an academy continues.