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Nancy Lees
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Dear Mrs Lees

Special measures monitoring inspection of Edale CofE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 13 February 2018, 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 second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in February 2017. 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'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 co-chairs of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Derby, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Derbyshire. This letter will be published on the

Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Urgently address the serious weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements by:
 - ensuring that all staff who work, or apply to work, at the school are rigorously vetted
 - maintaining a single central register in accordance with statutory requirements
 - ensuring that all staff who work with pupils receive appropriate safeguarding training
 - ensuring that records of any safeguarding concerns are logged and appropriate support is provided for pupils
 - ensuring that staff and pupils are helped to understand how to keep safe, including awareness of the dangers of extremism
 - making sure that all staff understand the allegations against staff policy and procedures.
- Improve the leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that stability in leadership is brought about as quickly as possible and that those responsible for leading and managing the school are properly supported
 - devising effective protocols for the management of behaviour, including incidents of serious misbehaviour and bullying
 - ensuring that all curriculum plans, including for subjects other than mathematics or English, for key stage 2, are implemented effectively
 - ensuring that pupils receive an effective programme of personal, social, health and economic education, across the school
 - implementing an effective policy to manage teachers' performance and ensuring that their teaching is supported well
 - ensuring that the school keeps accurate records of behaviour, teaching quality and pupils' progress and that leaders monitor and evaluate these aspects of the school regularly
 - maintaining a website which is compliant with statutory requirements
 - monitoring and evaluating the use of all government funding, including physical education and sports premium, pupil premium and special educational needs and/or disabilities funding
 - implementing an effective policy for the support of pupils who have special

educational needs and/or disabilities which complies with statutory requirements

- implementing an effective policy to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, so that they are properly prepared for life in modern Britain and the next stage of their education
 - developing a coherent reading strategy across the school and ensuring that pupils have access to a wide range of reading material appropriate to their age and ability
 - strengthening communication with parents, particularly with regard to the actions being taken to improve the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching in key stage 2 to accelerate the progress of all pupils by:
- ensuring that teachers' planning takes account of individual pupils' needs and capabilities
 - building more opportunities for pupils to extend their understanding and tackle more complex tasks in all subjects, so that the most able pupils can reach higher standards, particularly in mathematics
 - moderating all teachers' assessments thoroughly to ensure their greater reliability
 - ensuring that pupils use what they learn in English grammar and punctuation lessons to read and write more effectively
 - listening to pupils read regularly and developing their comprehension skills more effectively
 - ensuring that teachers have opportunities to learn from best practice both in the school and elsewhere.
- Improve pupils' personal development by:
- ensuring that pupils develop a broad understanding and appreciation of the faiths, cultures and communities that make up modern Britain
 - ensuring that pupils know how to keep themselves safe, especially online
 - helping pupils to understand how to lead a happy and healthy life and to be understanding of different types of relationships and lifestyles
 - working with families to ensure that pupils arrive at school on time
 - developing pupils' leadership skills and self-confidence by helping them to take on more responsibilities as they get older through the school.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 13 February 2018

Evidence

This inspection focused on the areas for improvement concerned with leadership and management and the quality of teaching at key stage 2. The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, members of the governing body, a teacher from key stage 2 and representatives of the local authority.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The senior leaders have established a well-thought-out programme of activities to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The programme has brought coherence to the way in which the quality of teaching is being improved. It links together the assessment of the pupils' learning, the tracking of their progress, the observation of the school's work and the management of the staff's performance, including helpful opportunities for professional development and training. This systematic approach is changing the culture of the school.

The results of those activities are already supporting the teachers in making practical improvements to their teaching. For example, the teachers are now involved in a suitable range of activities that help them to check on and to improve the accuracy of their assessments of the pupils' learning.

The programme of monitoring activities includes and is supported very well by the governing body. The governing body focuses sharply on the impact on the pupils of the school's work. It looks more closely now at the ways in which the school uses additional funding, such as the pupil premium and funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. As a result, the governing body is increasingly well informed. It uses its knowledge well to ask pertinent questions that prompt further improvements. It is, increasingly, an effective force for improvement at the school.

The school has made notable improvements to the curriculum. The curriculum and teaching plans provide good opportunities for the pupils to develop their literacy skills in a range of subjects, including science. The arrangements for science include equally good opportunities for the pupils to apply their mathematics knowledge and skills.

A plan for personal, social, health and economic education now sets out a programme of learning for all pupils throughout the academic year. The plan incorporates suitable activities and topics that contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. The actions taken to date have had a positive effect on the pupils' values and attitudes to learning.

The leaders and the governing body have identified practical ways to improve the school's communications with parents. Some of those ways have still to be implemented. As result, the impact of this work is not clear currently.

The long-term arrangements for the leadership of the school have not been secured. This is now a matter of some urgency. The current arrangements for the leadership of the school remain in place until the end of the current academic year. The governing body and the local authority have worked together effectively to identify options. They are pursuing those options thoroughly and carefully. At the time of this visit, a preferred option seems to be promising. Nevertheless, the current lack of a long-term solution poses the biggest risk to the school's continued improvement.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The improvements that have been made at key stage 2 mean that the teaching is now adapted more closely to the pupils' needs. The opportunities now provided for the teachers to test their assessments of the pupils' learning with other colleagues and professionals from outside of the school have helped the teachers to get a clear understanding of the pupils' learning needs.

Well-thought-out approaches, well-chosen resources and topics, and well-designed tasks get the pupils interested in learning. As a result, the pupils show commitment and a good level of concentration.

The teaching focuses on expanding the pupils' understanding. The pupils are questioned routinely in a way that makes them think more and makes them extend their answers and apply their learning. During this visit, the pupils were observed engaging in a good level of discussion, not just questions and answers, about different types of mountain ranges and geological phenomena. At other times, they were helped successfully to work out better ways of expressing themselves, when they had struggled to come up with good vocabulary.

The presentation of the pupils' work is not always as good as it might be. A good standard is not demanded often enough, particularly in mathematics and science, where precision is important. Despite the evidently greater concentration on spelling, grammar and punctuation, the pupils' errors are not corrected systematically.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

The leaders have expanded the range of opportunities for the pupils to learn about cultures other than their own. For example, the key stage 1 classroom is resplendent currently with the pupils' Chinese willow pattern designs, examples of their Chinese calligraphy, and even an area acting as a Chinese restaurant, among

many other symbols of Chinese culture.

The governing body has ascertained the positive impact of recent work to teach the pupils about e-safety. The recently formed Edale School Action Group is helping the pupils in key stage 2 to develop leadership skills and a sense of responsibility for the school community.

Outcomes for pupils

The inspector saw several examples of good-quality writing in different styles produced by the pupils. They have produced well-structured accounts of the death of Llewelyn's dog, Gelert. Some of the poetry written by the pupils about Storm Doris showed an excellent grasp of personification and some powerful descriptive writing. For example, one pupil wrote about the storm, 'She was an ugly, aggressive lion, seizing her victims.'

In geography, the pupils have learned to use technical vocabulary, such as tectonic plates and geological fault lines, accurately and confidently. Occasionally, they struggle to explain some of the concepts about which they have learned, such as causal conjunctions in English, even when their written work contains accurately used examples.

External support

The local authority has maintained an appropriate level of support for the school, notably through a 'team around the school'. It is providing practical assistance with finding a long-term solution for the leadership of the school. The school improvement adviser has provided useful feedback to the school that is assisting with the improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

The senior leaders have taken advantage of helpful opportunities to learn from practice at other schools. Both the local authority and the diocese have assisted the leaders in identifying and making contact with other schools where there is good practice. This has been helpful, for example, in improving Edale's work to track the progress of the pupils.