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Mrs Rachael Duke
Lambourn C.E. Primary School
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Dear Mrs Duke

Special measures monitoring inspection of Lambourn C.E. Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 9 to 10 May 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 recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring visit 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 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 appoint one newly qualified teacher before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Oxford, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for West Berkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Lee Selby

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:
 - making sure that the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe meet requirements
 - developing the skills and effectiveness of senior and middle leaders
 - ensuring that the curriculum covers the full range of subjects
 - ensuring that the school's website is fully compliant.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and raise achievement, by:
 - ensuring that teachers make accurate use of assessment information to plan tasks that are well matched to pupils' starting points, including those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able pupils
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly in reading and writing
 - developing teachers' questioning skills so that they can probe more deeply and extend pupils' understanding
 - ensuring that pupils develop basic writing and mathematical skills and apply these confidently when learning other subjects
 - ensuring that pupils know how to improve their work in accordance with the school's policy.

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 9 May 2018 to 10 May 2018

Evidence

Her Majesty's Inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, other school leaders, the chair and two other members of the governing body, and a senior representative from the local authority. He also spoke to the school's improvement adviser and a representative of the diocese by telephone. The inspector spoke to pupils in lessons and around the school. 34 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered.

Context

The headteacher was appointed shortly before the previous inspection. A new assistant headteacher joined the school in September 2017. One member of the teaching staff has recently returned to work after a long period of absence.

The school is due to close and reopen as an academy as part of the Excalibur Academy Trust on 1 September 2018.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The headteacher has successfully brought together a disparate group of teachers who often worked in isolation. They are now a team that wants to work together to improve the school. The headteacher has a strong drive to develop all aspects of the school. Her ambition is to do the very best to raise pupils' outcomes and the aspirations of everyone at Lambourn.

Swift and decisive action was taken following the previous inspection to improve safeguarding practices throughout the school. A full audit was carried out and actions completed to ensure that the school complies with statutory guidance, for example around the training of staff. The school also took action to successfully improve the security of the school's site, for example by adding a video entry system. Staff confirm that they now receive regular and relevant training to keep them up to date with their responsibilities around safeguarding. However, more importantly, regular discussions and a non-negotiable approach have ensured that there is now a strong safeguarding culture in the school. Parents are completely satisfied that their children are safe at school.

Governors are delighted to have strong leadership in place after a period of turbulence and turmoil. They are grateful for the information they receive from the headteacher and are developing the confidence to check things out for themselves. Governors attend regular training to keep themselves informed. They ask senior leaders challenging questions and focus on the most important things, which will improve the experience of pupils who attend the school. Governors know that the school holds a special place in the community and they take their custodianship of

this seriously. The chair of the governing body offers calm and assured leadership and has worked very well with the headteacher in preparation for the move to academy status.

The assistant headteachers have added additional capacity to the headteacher's leadership. Between them, they model strong teaching and an understanding of how to evaluate the impact of development actions. The assistant headteacher, responsible for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, has reviewed how extra teaching is put in place to help these pupils to catch up. However, initial evaluations show that this has a stronger impact in some cases than others because the extra work is usually led by teaching assistants. She is already planning how teachers can contribute more to helping those pupils who have fallen behind to catch up.

Leaders responsible for English and mathematics have started to take more action to improve the provision in their areas of responsibility. In mathematics, for example, a mastery approach has been introduced that routinely encourages pupils to reason mathematically and problem-solve. However, this is yet to have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes because the quality of mathematics teaching is not consistently strong enough. In some instances, leaders have not done enough to help secure improvement quickly.

The headteacher and other leaders check the quality of teaching regularly by visiting lessons and looking at pupils' work. Individual teachers are given feedback to help them improve. However, the overall strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning across the school are not analysed thoroughly. The school improvement plan is fit for purpose but its objectives about improving teaching and pupils' outcomes could be more precise and measurable.

The curriculum is planned to cover all of the subjects in the national curriculum and is enhanced by the opportunity to swim regularly and play musical instruments, such as steel drums. Extensive opportunities for visits and trips, including residential visits for all key stage 2 classes, help to broaden pupils' experience of life beyond Lambourn. Leaders recognise that there is more to do to ensure that the curriculum, in subjects other than English and mathematics, is developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding adequately. However, they have quite rightly decided to focus on pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills first.

The pupil premium review was timely and helpful. The school's vision, that 'no-one is left behind', is laudable. Disadvantaged pupils are given high status in this school. Their barriers to learning have been recognised and work to raise their aspirations is showing some signs of success. However, the progress and attainment of this group are still not good enough when compared to other pupils nationally.

Leaders and governors have now ensured that the information published on the school's website meets requirements. They know this will need to be reviewed when

the school reopens as an academy.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Staff have valued training and professional development, such as coaching and visiting other schools, to help them improve their teaching. The vast majority of teachers recognise that their practice could improve and that their pupils should be achieving more. Sometimes training has focused on a particular style of teaching rather than the things that will make the biggest difference to improving pupils' outcomes.

Questioning by teachers and teaching assistants has improved. It is more effective in small-group situations and when adults work with individuals to help them overcome difficulties or challenge them further. When addressing the whole class, teachers do not target their questions well enough to ensure that all pupils have to think deeply.

The school's marking and feedback policy is followed consistently. It is helping pupils to make gains in their learning in the short term by helping them to know what they need to improve during a particular topic or piece of work.

Assessment information is not used well enough to plan lessons that meet the needs of pupils. Work is often too easy or too difficult. Teachers are not confident to change their plans during lessons when pupils are not succeeding as they had intended. Teachers are not returning to easier work when pupils have fundamental gaps in their knowledge and understanding that need addressing. Teachers do not recognise that this will ultimately help to accelerate progress, as pupils will have firmer foundations to build upon. For example, teachers expect pupils to solve word problems involving finding fractions of quantities before pupils have an adequate understanding of division.

Expectations are often too low. Teachers do not make clear what they expect from pupils in terms of the quality and quantity of work. The headteacher now recognises and agrees that looking at the 'Teachers' standards' will help identify the most important aspects of teaching that need to be addressed quickly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils are safe at school because of the improvements in safeguarding procedures, and because of the care and guidance provided by staff. Parents who completed Ofsted's survey, Parent View, are confident that their children are safe and happy at school.

Work led by the parent-support worker has strengthened relationships with parents and carers. Many parents now have a place to go to receive additional help and advice at times of difficulty. The parent-support worker, headteacher and other

professionals work together well to keep the most vulnerable pupils safe from harm.

Behaviour in class and around the school is generally positive; for example, pupils eat and play together sensibly at lunchtime. However, pupils quickly become distracted and off-task when lessons are not interesting or when their work is too easy or too hard.

Outcomes for pupils

In 2017, progress through key stage 2 declined further and was significantly weaker than in other schools nationally. The school's assessment information indicates that while pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to do better than in previous years, only a third are likely to meet national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.

Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 are in line with national averages. However, this achievement is not built on quickly in lower key stage 2, where progress begins to slow.

The progress of current pupils is too variable and is not helping the very many pupils who have fallen behind catch up. This is due to remaining weaknesses in teaching and because assessment information is not used effectively.

Leaders do not track pupils' progress from their starting points. Leaders have a great deal of information about pupils' attainment. However, they do not know if those who have fallen behind are catching up or if the most able are being challenged.

In some year groups, disadvantaged pupils are starting to catch up with their non-disadvantaged peers in the school. However, they are not catching up with other pupils nationally because overall attainment is so low, especially at key stage 2.

External support

The local authority has helpfully brokered support from the Downland Alliance to support teachers to improve their practice. The local authority has very effectively ensured that the support and challenge offered by the school improvement partner, diocese and local teaching school have complemented each other and met the emerging needs of the school. Regular meetings to check the school's progress have been robust and, while recognising improvements, have clearly identified remaining weaknesses to be addressed.