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Emilie Haston  
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Dear Mrs Haston

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Eardley School**

Following my visit with Kanwaljit Singh, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 12 and 13 June 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 March 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 may appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the interim executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wandsworth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jude Wilson

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - securing and sustaining effective leadership at all levels to improve teaching, learning and assessment, so that all groups of pupils across the school make at least good progress
  - ensuring that provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective across all year groups
  - ensuring that assessment information is accurate and is used to support teachers in identifying appropriate next steps for learners in reading, writing and mathematics
  - further improving attendance, so that it is at least in line with the national average, particularly for those pupils who are disadvantaged
  - ensuring that governors rigorously hold leaders to account for pupil premium funding spending, so that outcomes for disadvantaged pupils improve in all year groups
  - ensuring that actions are taken to increase the playtime and social time that pupils are given.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - the good practice that leads to stronger progress for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is shared across other year groups
  - teachers use their knowledge of the progress pupils make, so that pupils, regardless of their year group, make good progress
  - teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve, and that they meet the needs of the lowest attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - teachers provide tasks which interest and inspire pupils so that incidents of low-level disruption or unfocused behaviour become rare
  - teachers in all year groups implement all aspects of the school's mathematics curriculum, including problem-solving and reasoning
  - all staff responsible for teaching phonics have the necessary training and subject knowledge to help pupils make good progress and apply their phonics skills confidently to reading and writing tasks.
- Improve the early years provision by:
  - securing effective leadership to help teachers improve their skills, so that children are able to enjoy their learning and achieve well

- ensuring that teachers in the Reception classes use the indoor and outdoor provision effectively to promote and support children’s learning across the curriculum
- making sure that the information gathered about the progress children make from their varying starting points is accurate.

An external review of the school’s use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to ascertain how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance is recommended in order to ascertain how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 12 June 2018 to 13 June 2018**

### **Evidence**

This second monitoring inspection focused on the effectiveness of leadership and management, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and the early years provision. During the inspection, meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders and groups of teaching staff. The inspection team had discussions with the local authority link inspector and the chair of the interim executive board. Inspectors visited lessons across all year groups, accompanied by school leaders. Inspectors spoke to pupils formally in groups. Inspectors spoke to some parents and looked at responses to school surveys. The inspection team evaluated the quality of learning in a sample of pupils' books from across the school, and scrutinised documents provided by the school. Inspectors checked the single central record of staff suitability checks.

### **Context**

The head of school at the time of the first monitoring visit was appointed as the substantive headteacher in January 2018. The consultant headteacher is still in post, working closely with the headteacher, and is at the school three days per week. The assistant headteacher, funded by the local authority, is no longer in post. The school has had some changes in its teaching staff since the previous visit, with a significant turnover of staff in some classes. In early years, the Reception teacher left in February 2018. The early years leader moved from Nursery to Reception. The school is gradually becoming a one-form entry school. The governing body was dissolved in October 2017. An interim executive board was set up in its place by the local authority. The school is fully staffed for September 2018. The school has sponsorship from Dunraven School, and is in the process of converting to academy status. This is expected to be finalised by January 2019.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Since the previous monitoring visit, senior leaders have continued to address the areas for improvement identified at the Ofsted inspection in March 2017. All members of the school community have greeted the head of school's appointment as substantive headteacher positively. This has stabilised leadership in the school and provides continuity as the school moves forward. One member of staff said: 'We feel that we are in safe hands.' This comment represents the views heard from staff, parents and pupils. The consultant headteacher supports the headteacher very well, and is gradually withdrawing from the overall leadership and management of the school.

School leaders are open and honest about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They recognise that the school is on a journey, and has suffered some

setbacks along the way, such as changes in staffing and delays in the academisation process. Leaders face these challenges head on, and are realistic about the school's overall effectiveness at this stage. Staff are resilient and optimistic about the school's future as an academy. They understand that change is necessary, but they know that school leaders value their hard work.

Leaders are mostly accurate in their evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning in the school. They monitor this carefully through regular lesson observations and book scrutinies to review pupils' progress. Their findings feed in to the whole-school staff training, and are used to inform personalised targets. This has led to some improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, but there are still areas of weak practice. High staff turnover has had a negative impact. Consequently, pupils' progress is variable and is still stronger in Years 5 and 6 than in other year groups.

Leaders are much more confident in the accuracy of their assessment procedures. Work alongside teachers from local schools to review pupils' work has helped in this. Teachers and leaders regularly meet with staff in other schools to check that their assessments are correct. By and large, external moderators agree with their judgements. This validation has proved to be a watershed moment for the school. Staff now have an accurate basis for identifying next steps for their pupils' learning.

Leaders have continued to drive improvements in the provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Parents, in particular, feel that their child's needs are being met more effectively than previously. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that pupils who have complex needs receive the right support. They work closely with external agencies so that pupils are assessed accurately and get the specialist care that they need, such as from an educational psychologist or a speech and language therapist.

Leaders now monitor the support given to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities closely, having realised that staff did not always use or understand the information that they were given about SEN. Through specific training and guidance with lesson planning, teachers are more secure in their understanding of the individual needs of their pupils. Importantly, they recognise that the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is a shared responsibility. However, progress for this group of pupils is still inconsistent.

Overall attendance, including for disadvantaged pupils, is much improved and is now in line with the national average. Leaders' effective actions have also reduced the rates of persistent absence.

Governance of the school has significantly improved since the previous monitoring visit. The interim executive board (IEB) was set up in December 2017 and swiftly gained an accurate picture of the school's position. From the start, members of the board have held leaders rigorously to account and provided strategic direction.

Minutes of meetings show clear evidence of robust challenge and questioning from the board members. They ask the right questions about the school's performance. The IEB secured the appointment of the substantive headteacher, and has helped to make a number of appointments for September 2018. The IEB has been instrumental in ensuring that the finances of the school are better managed. IEB members are now focused on the next stages of development for the school. In particular, they are ensuring that there is a smooth transition to becoming an academy.

An external review of pupil premium funding, recommended at the previous inspection, took place in December 2017. The thorough investigation concluded that pupil premium funding is not used effectively. Leaders accepted the findings, but have only recently started to put actions in place to address this. Money is now allocated to each class according to the numbers of pupils eligible for the funding. Analysis of the interventions in place to support pupils' learning showed that these are not always having a positive impact. Where teachers know their pupils' needs well, they have planned effective additional support. However, it is evident that more work is needed in this area, as disadvantaged pupils are not making sufficient progress.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

The quality of teaching and learning is still inconsistent. Current performance information reflects this, and shows that there is wide variation in progress and attainment across year groups and subjects. A few classes have had frequent changes in teachers this year, which has disrupted pupils' learning.

Some year groups are dealing with a legacy of weak teaching over time. Leaders and staff are trying to bridge the gaps in knowledge and skills. This is particularly the case in mathematics and writing. Pupils in Year 6, for example, have made strong progress this year from low starting points due to good teaching. Unfortunately, staff have had to spend additional time teaching the basics of mathematical concepts, such as fractions, and pupils cannot always cope with work at the higher standard.

There are significant improvements, however, in the teaching of the new mathematics programme. As well as the ongoing training in school, staff have benefited from observing good practice in other schools. They are increasingly confident and skilled in using a range of techniques and resources to support pupils' learning. Pupils are using subject-specific vocabulary more frequently to explain their working out. In some cases, however, pupils show a lack of understanding of the work that they do. This is particularly noticeable in lower-ability pupils' books, where many tasks are incomplete.

Leaders have altered their approach to how reading is taught. Guided reading sessions, particularly in key stage 2, are based on high-quality texts. Pupils delve

deeply into sections of the text, pulling out key details. Teachers model pupil responses increasingly well, although questioning lacks depth at times.

As a result of focused training and monitoring, teachers plan lessons to meet the needs of their pupils. However, at times they do not use this planning effectively. Most-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently and often have to wait for other pupils to complete their work before a new task is given. This means that pupils are not moved on quickly in their learning. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities complete classwork with lots of additional support, but do not always show a secure understanding of the work that they have done.

The newly introduced creative curriculum, where pupils learn other subjects through a different topic each half term, is still a work in progress. 'Wow' days continue to motivate and enthuse pupils. For example, Year 5 pupils enjoyed a visit from 'The Learning Dome' in preparation for their work on earth and space, and went to the Natural History Museum as part of their topic work on insects. Pupils' work shows that they do not make strong progress in a broad range of subjects, although writing across the curriculum is improving. The quality of some topics is inconsistent, and leaders are planning to review how some topics are planned and taught. Pupils said that they liked having more lessons in subjects such as design and technology.

### **Early years**

The early years provision has undergone some turbulence this year with changes in staff and areas of weak teaching. In February, the school reassessed children's baseline assessments and found that children were not making sufficient progress. Leaders have put measures in place to halt any further decline. An early years consultant now works at the school one day a week, advising and supporting the early years team. In addition, a specialist early years leader from another school provides additional support, and is joining the school in September 2018.

The early years team in Reception has worked successfully to address the inaccuracies in assessment. The team has identified children's next steps correctly, and it makes sure that children at risk of underachieving have caught up. Currently 76% of the children are on track to achieve a good level of development this year.

Staff have reviewed the indoor and outdoor provision in early years. The external review identified mathematics as a key focus for children's learning. As a result, staff have created more opportunities for children to learn in this subject, including establishing a mathematics room where there are many interesting and stimulating activities. The outdoor provision provides a wealth of exciting and purposeful activities for children.



## **External support**

The local authority has continued to provide effective extensive support to the school. This has included regular reviews of the overall effectiveness of the school, as well as arranging external reviews of specific aspects of the school, such as pupil premium, early years, and provision for SEN and/or disabilities. The local authority was instrumental in setting up the interim executive board, and has provided specialist consultants to advise school leaders and deliver quality staff training to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The local authority and headteacher have established links with other schools, giving staff opportunities to observe good practice and broaden their pedagogical knowledge.