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27 March 2009

Ms Prue Barnes  
Interim Headteacher  
Daubeney Primary School  
Daubeney Road  
Clapton  
London  
E5 OEG

Dear Ms Barnes

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Daubeney Primary School

Following my visit with John Earish and Madeleine Gerard, Additional Inspectors, to your school on 16 and 17 March 2009, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in June 2008. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed subject to the following qualification:

- the school may appoint a maximum of three newly qualified teachers.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of the Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children and Families for Hackney.

Yours sincerely

Usha Sahni  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Daubeney Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 16 and 17 March 2009

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work; scrutinised documents; and met with the interim and consultant headteachers, groups of pupils, parents, the chairman of the Interim Executive Board, and representatives from the Learning Trust. Every teacher was observed teaching a lesson.

## Context

Since the last monitoring visit, there have been significant changes in the senior leadership team. In January 2009, the head of school was appointed as the interim headteacher and the executive headteacher assumed the position of a consultant headteacher on a reduced time allocation of two days a week to support the school. A new deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher also took up their posts in January 2009.

The situation regarding teaching staff remains unstable. Since the last inspection, five teachers have been replaced by supply staff. All 14 supply teachers, out of a complement of 25 teaching staff, were trained overseas. The school has supported four teachers in obtaining qualified-teacher status, and a further six are working towards it. At least half the teachers have worked at the school for less than a year. The school roll has been rising steadily and most year groups are now oversubscribed; some pupils who had left the school are returning.

An Interim Executive Board (IEB) has met twice since it was constituted in January 2009. The local authority representatives oversee the work of the school through a Trust Action Group; the IEB plans to subsume the functions of this group into its remit.

## Achievement and standards

Standards in English, mathematics and science continue to be exceptionally low by the end of Year 6. However, pupils are making better progress overall since the last monitoring visit; they make good progress in lessons where teaching is of good quality. This was particularly evident in the lessons observed in the Nursery and Reception classes and in classes in Years 2 and 6.

Better progress made by pupils in lessons is enabling the school to narrow the gap between the pupils' current attainment and the standards expected for their age. The school's analysis of assessment data confirms that the majority of pupils in Year 2 have made good progress since the last monitoring visit, with an increasing proportion achieving the higher levels. However, the school is aware that progress remains unsatisfactory in Year 1.

In Key Stage 2, overall attainment remains exceptionally low in all the year groups. However, the inspectors' observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work confirm the school's analysis of data which show an improving profile of attainment from Year 3 to Year 6. Since the last monitoring visit, most pupils in Year 6 classes have made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, too much variability in the rate of progress for pupils in the different classes from Years 3 to 5 remains; this is linked to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, partly caused by staff turnover.

From low starting points, pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes are making satisfactory progress in all the six areas of learning. As a result of carefully planned teaching, their phonic knowledge, early reading, and speaking and listening skills are developing well.

Progress since the last monitoring visit on the areas for improvement:

- raise standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science – satisfactory

#### Personal development and well-being

The pupils feel very positive about the continuing improvements to the fabric of the building and say they enjoy the facilities the school offers, particularly the better-equipped playground. They believe that interesting things to do during break-times help people to 'be happy' and 'play together' instead of getting into fights, which are now rare. Pupils are punctual and their attendance remains above average. One pupil was excluded for three days in the spring term. Pupils are less tolerant of disruptions to their lessons, and say that they expect everyone to behave well and follow school rules because 'teachers should be able to teach us and not get frustrated by having to talk to the same people again and again about school rules'.

Many pupils express satisfaction with the improved quality of teaching. They remain concerned about the disruption to their learning and classroom routines caused by changes in teachers. In lessons, they behave well and are keen to do well. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 are clearly motivated by their desire for better futures – they spoke enthusiastically about how good results and good school reports might help them get to a 'good secondary school of their choice and get a good education'.

The procedures for keeping pupils safe meet the government requirements.

#### Quality of provision

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has made satisfactory progress in improving just over half the teaching to the level of good. However, a quarter of all lessons observed by the inspectors were inadequate. The leadership team, supported by consultants from the Learning Trust, has established a clear set of expectations for all teachers to follow a consistent approach to planning and

teaching lessons. Consequently, most lessons are characterised by detailed plans of what the pupils will learn. These plans identify clear learning objectives which are shared with the pupils at the start of each lesson. Increasingly, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to play an active part in their learning through discussion and debate.

Pupils say that lessons have become more interesting and now include more practical activities which help them to learn better. They find that teachers explain things clearly, which helps them to start and finish their work more quickly. Older pupils are increasingly willing to take on responsibility for their learning. They say, for example, that there are more opportunities for them to design and carry out their own experiments in science, when 'they laugh a lot and learn a lot more too'. They find this enjoyable and say it helps them to understand new ideas. However, there are still too many occasions when teachers fail to exploit fully the opportunities for the more able pupils to work independently or use their skills to explore ideas for themselves. In an increasing number of lessons, good use of interactive whiteboards helps to motivate pupils and makes learning come alive for them. This was well illustrated in a lesson where an imaginative use of PowerPoint to demonstrate the instructions to make a mask successfully inspired pupils to design their own mask to the same high quality.

Persistent inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and in teachers' expectations are reflected in the improving but variable rates of progress made by pupils in different classes. In the good lessons seen, teaching was imaginative and challenging for all pupils and engaged individuals in the assessment of their learning and progress; as a result, pupils felt motivated to do better than what they had previously thought was their best. In the less successful lessons, work was poorly matched to pupils' needs and did not meet the wide range of abilities within the class. These lessons were not well organised, time was wasted, and the slow pace of learning led to a loss of interest by pupils. The role and contribution of the learning support staff were unclear and, therefore, ineffective in meeting the specific needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The senior team is working closely with the teachers and the support staff to improve the weaker areas of practice rapidly in order to secure consistently good progress for all pupils.

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has implemented a reviewed marking policy. Improvements in the marking of pupils' work are evident in almost all the classes. Most pupils appreciate the feedback and find that it is helping them to improve their work. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 know their targets in English and mathematics, but this is not consistently so for pupils in other year groups.

Progress since the last monitoring visit on the areas for improvement:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning by raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve – satisfactory

The new systems put in place to assess pupils' achievement and standards are enabling the school to check the progress made by individual pupils. This

information is beginning to be used effectively to identify pupils who are falling behind. Consequently, some effective interventions are now in place to support identified groups of pupils who are not reaching the standards expected for their age in literacy and mathematics, particularly in Years 5 and 6. However, similar provision for pupils in other classes is not consistently in place. The recent emphasis on teaching phonics is supported by small-group work throughout the school for pupils who need additional guidance. Although pupils in Years 3 and 5 are given additional tutoring in mathematics, similar targeted support for pupils in other year groups who need extra help in this subject is not routinely in place.

Since the last monitoring visit, insufficient progress has been made in setting up systems that can be used by the teachers promptly and routinely to communicate concerns about the progress of individual pupils, including those who are more vulnerable. There is no system in place swiftly to assess the learning needs of pupils who join the school other than at the usual starting times.

There is substantial provision in place in terms of the staff employed to support pupils with additional learning needs, including those who have learning difficulties and disabilities. Currently, up to 30 adults are involved in providing such support to individuals and small groups, both in and out of classes. However, this provision is not strategically managed to provide well-coordinated or coherent teaching and personal support to pupils as they move through the school. Consequently, provision is unevenly spread across the school and there is no system in place to ensure that every pupil receives or benefits from an appropriate level of extra help in order to make the progress of which they are capable.

Teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum and attainment levels in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is improving as a result of recent training but, more importantly, through their involvement in assessing the progress made by pupils in their classes. This increase in their understanding of the criteria for the different levels of attainment, together with support and guidance on the use of assessment data, is helping most teachers to plan work that is more suitably matched to the needs of the pupils.

Progress since the last monitoring visit on the areas for improvement:

- ensure that pupils' learning needs are identified promptly and that effective interventions are put in place to accelerate their progress – satisfactory

## Leadership and management

Since the last inspection, the senior leadership team's capacity has been enhanced by the arrival of a new deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher. The consultant headteacher and the senior school improvement adviser from the Learning Trust provide effective support to the senior team to keep it on track with the planned improvements. Together, they are successfully driving the necessary improvements. By engaging the staff and pupils in an open and honest dialogue about their ambitions for the school, the senior leaders are communicating high



expectations of all adults who work with the pupils. The staff show a clearer understanding of their roles and are eager to contribute to the required improvements. This was evident in their keen desire to engage with the inspectors' feedback on lessons observed, in that they constantly sought advice on how they could improve their teaching.

The headteacher and her team have worked diligently to support all the class teachers to assess each pupil's progress in reading, writing and mathematics. These data have been checked for accuracy, and carefully analysed in order to secure a reliable starting point for measuring the school's success in ensuring good progress for all the pupils, in both the short and the long term. Based on this analysis, the targets for pupils have been reviewed to ensure that they are challenging enough, particularly for some pupils in Year 6 whose targets are now ambitious and should help them to reach the standards expected for their age. This information is beginning to influence the identification of pupils who have fallen behind and important decisions about the kind of help that should step up their progress and the people who can best provide such additional help.

Since the last monitoring visit, the senior leaders have been highly effective in improving the overall quality of teaching, particularly in increasing the proportion of good lessons. They have achieved this by regularly monitoring lessons and informing teachers of their strengths and specific points for development to improve their teaching so that it is good. The headteacher and her deputy maintain an up-to-date analysis of all observations and are very well informed about the specific professional development needs of each member of staff. They are using this information to provide follow-up individual mentoring and coaching to improve on the weaker areas of practice in the school. The tracking records of the quality of teaching show that these actions are having a positive impact on raising the quality of teaching and teachers' confidence. However, a strong emphasis on securing good-quality classroom practice in the teaching of basic skills means that the quality of teaching in the foundation subjects is not being monitored or developed yet.

A comprehensive audit has been carried out to evaluate the levels of basic skills of literacy and numeracy among the learning support staff. A suitable programme of professional development, including enrolment on National Vocational Qualifications courses in literacy and numeracy, is in place to improve the quality of learning support for pupils.

Although the school demonstrates good capacity at the senior level, vacancies for the leadership of many subjects and aspects of school's work limit the capacity at middle leadership levels. As a consequence of effective mentoring by the senior team, the subject leaders for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and for the Early Years and Foundation Stage are fulfilling their roles with greater confidence.

The senior leaders have effective induction and training systems in place to support the staff on supply or short-term contracts. However, a high number of vacancies for

substantive posts and persistent recruitment difficulties place a high demand on their time to provide such support and monitor the professional development of constantly changing staff. This poses a serious challenge to their ability to promote consistently good practice and build a strong staff team that can bring about sustained improvements across all areas of the school's work, including opportunities for pupils to build secure and sustainable relationships with their teachers.

Progress since the last monitoring visit on the areas for improvement:

- increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring there is systematic and rigorous monitoring of standards and provision by leaders at all levels, and by the governing body – satisfactory

### External support

The Learning Trust has maintained a high level of support for the school by allocating regular support from the Senior Education and Improvement Adviser (SIA) and other consultants who work alongside teachers in lessons. The consultant headteacher and the SIA have effectively supported the senior team in their robust analysis of assessment data and have helped to monitor and support the contribution from different consultant teachers to develop the school's capacity for improvement. There is a clear acknowledgement among all concerned of the changing leadership context and the increasing capacity of the school. This is evident in the confidence with which the headteacher and the deputy headteacher have driven many of the positive initiatives in the school since the last monitoring visit.

The IEB has recently been established and its members have agreed a regular cycle of meetings. The members of the board have made initial contact with parents to seek their views and contribution to improving the school. Parents are keen to become involved in the life of the school and seek active opportunities for doing so.

The local authority's initial statement of action has not been modified to reflect the changes in the context of the school, most notably, the increased capacity demonstrated by its senior leaders and managers. Although the support arrangements have served the school well in many respects, the evaluation of the impact of the external support is not robust enough for it to respond appropriately to the emerging and most urgent challenges that the school faces; for example, to name just two of them, a more strategic management of the extensive provision of additional support for the pupils and the severe teacher recruitment difficulties.

Progress since the last monitoring visit – satisfactory