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23 November 2009

Mrs Munns
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Munns

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Manor Fields Primary School

Following my visit with Peter Thrussell, additional inspector, to your school on 11 and 12 November 2009, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

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

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – inadequate

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 governors and the Director of Children Services for Wiltshire.

Yours sincerely
John Seal
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Manor Fields Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 11 and 12 November 2009

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work; scrutinised documents; and met with the headteacher, members of staff, and representatives from the governing body and local authority.

Context

Since the last monitoring visit, there have been some changes in staffing. Recently, a leading teacher from a local school has started teaching the Year 6 class four mornings a week. The substantive teacher continues to teach the class in the afternoons and Fridays. The teacher of the Year 5 class is absent owing to illness and the school is using its own cover arrangements to ensure continuity. In Year 2, there is a long-term supply teacher until the end of the autumn term. The leadership team has been adjusted so that the headteacher is currently the acting literacy leader and the Year 4 teacher is now the science manager. The governing body has one staff vacancy.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

The unvalidated results for the 2009 Key Stage 2 national tests in English, mathematics and science indicate that most of the pupils in Year 6 attained results which were extremely low, and lower than those in 2008.

Pupils' attainment in assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2009 was a mixed picture. Overall, attainment was below average. However, the number of pupils attaining the higher than average levels in writing was slightly above average. Boys' attainment in reading and writing, and girls' attainment in mathematics, were broadly in line with the national average. Girls' attainment in reading and writing, and boys' attainment in mathematics, were below average.

The school's data and pupils' work seen during the visit indicate that progress is still too slow and a very significant proportion of pupils have a long way to go to achieve standards that are in line with national expectations in all year groups across Key Stage 1 and, particularly, Key Stage 2. Underachievement is most profound in Years 5 and 6.

The school's information regarding younger children in Reception indicates that they made good progress in the previous year and start Year 1 with slightly above average levels. Information for the current Reception class indicates this positive trend is continuing.



Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Raise achievement and standards, especially in mathematics and science in Key Stage 2, and particularly for the more able pupils – inadequate.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils now respond well to staff expectations and, as a result, behave well both in classrooms and around the school. Pupils enjoy their lessons, especially when they are being challenged and can take part in practical activities. Attendance is broadly average. The very low attainment in reading, writing and mathematics hinders the development of pupils' basic skills, which contribute to their future life and learning.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

Raise 335184

- expectations of pupils' behaviour in order to ensure pupils' learning is not disrupted by the challenging behaviour of a minority of boys, particularly in Key Stage 2 – good.

The effectiveness of provision

Manor Fields continues to be a caring school with a friendly welcoming atmosphere. The school has put a lot of effort into developing planning, marking and target setting across the school. These efforts have been hampered by a range of challenges, for example, staffing difficulties due to illness, retirement and delayed appointments. Since the last monitoring visit, a basic level of consistency has been maintained, but very few further developments or improvements have been applied across the whole school and, as a result, the proportion of good lessons has not risen since the last visit. Most lessons are suitably planned and have common features in most year groups and they broadly take account of pupils' different abilities. Some good features include teachers' subject knowledge in literacy and numeracy and an increasing number of practical activities. For example, pupils in Year 5 were using the principles of fair testing well to investigate air resistance. Most classes are managed well with clear, structured lessons and established routines which helps pupils to respond well to their learning. There is some effective marking of work in some subjects, which helps pupils make good progress by specifying what they need to do next.

The proportion of lessons that are satisfactory rather than good is too high. This hinders pupils from making good or better progress. As at the time of the last visit, key features of these less effective lessons include planning which, although consistent, does not use information about pupils' learning in enough detail; marking which, while regular, does not provide enough information to show pupils how to improve their work; and target setting that is insufficiently detailed to meet the individual learning needs of all pupils or to identify what their next steps should be. Not all the different groups of pupils are always planned for, including those pupils who have English as an



additional language or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The impact of these shortcomings is that a significant number of pupils make limited progress which, at their current rate, will not be enough to attain standards that are expected nationally.

Vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with caring and sensitive support, especially from the learning support centre team. However, because many pupils are not supported by effective plans or supportive activities for most of their time in the classroom, they do not make enough progress.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality of target setting and marking so that pupils understand more clearly the next steps in their learning – inadequate.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The school has an appropriate action plan to support improvement. However, the implementation of the plan by senior management, through formal monitoring and evaluation of pupil progress and the quality of teaching and learning, is not rigorous or frequent enough. As a consequence, although the strengths and weaknesses of the school are known, and challenging circumstances are undoubtedly dealt with, senior managers are often overwhelmed or distracted by the range of difficulties. Consequently, the pace of the school's improvement is severely hindered. This is especially so with regard to the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. There are too few senior members of staff who have the experience or expertise to ensure that improvements are established throughout the school. This limits the school's capacity to improve outcomes for pupils swiftly and effectively. The governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and take an active part in the school's improvement. They are businesslike in their meetings and now provide suitable challenge. Safeguarding is robust, and all procedures, training and the single central register are in place.

The quality of work to improve the curriculum was not a main focus of this visit.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure school leaders use the outcomes of self-evaluation more effectively to implement measures to improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum – inadequate.

External support

The local authority continues to provide suitable planning and support which matches the priorities outlined in the Ofsted report from January 2009. This support includes regular and helpful visits from an advisory headteacher, primary teaching consultants,



leading teachers and senior local authority officers who often attend governing body meetings.

