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Mr S Turner
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Turner

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Killamarsh Junior School

Following my visit with Kathleen Yates AI to your school on 4-5 December 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in June 2009. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate

Newly Qualified Teachers may not be appointed

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's Services for Derbyshire.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Killamarsh Junior School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 3-4 December 2009

Evidence

The inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, senior leaders, teaching assistants, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority.

Context

Since the last inspection one teacher has left the school and the deputy headteacher has been released from her class teaching duties to improve the effectiveness of leadership and management. To fill the class teaching vacancies, two teachers have been appointed on temporary contracts. Additionally, one teacher has been absent through illness since July 2009. Her teaching commitment is being covered by a supply teacher.

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

The 2009 end of Key Stage 2 test results have been published and confirm the provisional information that was available at the time of the last inspection. The test results showed that, although pupils' attainment was below average and progress was inadequate, both had improved considerably from 2008, mainly because the proportion of pupils that reached the higher level 5 in English had risen significantly. However, since the inspection, there is no evidence to show that this improvement has continued. Although in some lessons pupils make good progress, there are far too many lessons where pupils' progress is no better than satisfactory and sometimes it is inadequate. Consequently, pupils' attainment in the current Year 6 is below average and the rate at which pupils make progress remains inadequate.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Nearly all pupils show positive attitudes to their work. They arrive at lessons eager to learn and, when given the opportunity, work well together and show a good level of independence. On the occasions when some pupils are restless and inattentive in lessons, it is because activities do not motivate them to learn, the pace of learning is slow and the work they are given is not matched well enough to their capabilities.

The effectiveness of provision

Monitoring by the school and the local authority indicates that the quality of teaching and learning remains inconsistent. Observations undertaken during the monitoring inspection showed that, although there is some good and occasionally outstanding teaching, there remains too much that is no better than satisfactory and some which



is inadequate. In many lessons, teachers are not clear enough about what they want pupils to learn and do not plan carefully enough the small steps which help ensure that pupils make good progress. Consequently, although most pupils work hard at the activities given by the teachers, they are not guided well enough in their learning.

The school has undertaken work to improve teachers' ability to grade pupils' attainment against national curriculum levels and to use this information to ensure that work is carefully matched to pupils of all capabilities. However, although there is some improvement, most teachers are not yet skilled enough. Consequently, many pupils, especially the more able and the least able, are frequently given work which is too easy or too hard.

Judgement

Progress since the last inspection on the area for improvement:

- Raise standards, particularly in English, to above the national average and accelerate the rate of pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 by:
 - improving the quality of teaching and learning so that it is at least good, and ensuring there is consistent effective practice throughout the school
 - ensuring that assessment information is used effectively to set work that accurately matches the next steps in all pupils' learning
 - providing training for staff to ensure accurate grading of pupils' work in English, mathematics and science according to the National Curriculum levels
 - inadequate.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Since the last inspection, the deputy headteacher has been released from her class teaching duties to focus full-time on improving the monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the school. The numeracy coordinator has also been allocated additional time to provide training for teachers and monitor the quality of provision in mathematics. Senior leaders are currently attending a leadership programme and the local authority has provided support for leaders on school self-evaluation. All leaders are committed to school improvement and are enthusiastic to develop their leadership skills. However, leaders are aware that their skills of analysing pupils' progress data, evaluating outcomes of initiatives and judging the impact of teaching on pupils' learning are still at the very early stages of development. Consequently, the evaluation of the performance of the school is not yet accurate enough and some of the major teaching and learning issues have not been tackled with sufficient rigour. Although teaching assistants have received some training and a few provide effective support, their skills have not been developed quickly enough. In many lessons, not enough of their time is spent working with the pupils. Few teaching



assistants are involved with teachers in planning and consequently they do not know how to guide pupils through their learning.

Judgement

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement

- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management across the school by:
 - increasing the amount of weekly management time for the deputy headteacher and the wider leadership team, to enable them to organise, structure and implement the monitoring, recording and evaluation of the performance of the school
 - using the information from monitoring and evaluation to address identified needs promptly and to record the outcomes
 - defining and developing the role of middle managers, subject leaders, coordinators and teaching assistants to help ensure that they have a consistently good impact on pupils' achievement and standards – inadequate.

External support

All leaders say they are pleased with the support they have received from the local authority. Actions taken by the local authority to provide support and guidance have been focused appropriately on the main areas for improvement stemming from the statement of action. However, the local authority's work has yet to have a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning, raising the skills of the school's leaders and accelerating pupils' progress.

Priorities for further improvement

There are no further priorities for improvement. The school, supported by the local authority, should tackle the areas for improvement with greater rigour and a renewed sense of urgency. However, it is essential that all inadequate teaching is eradicated as a matter of urgency.