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24 February 2010

Ms Nicky Powell
Headteacher
Crawford Primary School
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Dear Ms Powell

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Crawford Primary School

Following my visit with David Westall, additional inspector, to your school on 11 and 12 February 2010, 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 October 2009. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

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, the Director of Children's Services for Southwark and the inspection team.

Yours sincerely

Stephen McShane
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Crawford Primary School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 11 and 12 February 2010

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, groups of staff, governors and pupils as well as a representative from the local authority. During the inspection, Year 6 were on a school journey to the Isle of Wight.

Context

Since the last inspection, the headteacher has decided to retire. She is due to leave the school at the end of the summer term. A deputy headteacher has been seconded from another school and joined Crawford in January 2010. The school is now part of the 'Keys to Success' project which is part of the London Challenge.

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

Since the last inspection, there is particularly encouraging progress in literacy in Year 6 as a result of well targeted work. As a result of this accelerated progress, pupils are on course to reach standards that are likely to be a little higher than those in 2009. In view of the exceptionally low attainment of this cohort at the end of Key Stage 1, the impact of the improvement is significant. Progress in other year groups is less marked, particularly in mathematics, and the school has recognised the need for acceleration in mathematics across the school.

The school's data show that pupils' progress across the school is uneven. The school is aware that some of its assessments may not be fully accurate and therefore make it difficult for the school to judge added value correctly between year groups. This is an additional weakness that must be addressed as a matter of urgency. The school's introduction of clearer data systems and regular progress meetings is particularly appropriate in these circumstances.

The school analysis of intervention programmes shows that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making satisfactory progress. The progress of the most able pupils is less secure and in some lessons that were observed their progress was too limited.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

In lessons, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes and most maintain their concentration well. Around the school and in the playground, pupils behave well.



Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for. They have a strong understanding of the school's core values of integrity, peace, respect, love and truth. In discussion with groups of pupils, most said they enjoyed school, liked their teachers and found most lessons interesting. Some pupils said they felt lessons became boring when they had to sit and listen to their teacher for too long.

The effectiveness of provision

The school has introduced and is using a common planning framework for lessons that is now used consistently. The learning intentions are now identified in all lessons and most have differentiated outcomes for groups of pupils with reasonable precision. On occasions, the level of challenge for the most capable pupils is not sufficiently high. Teachers are now clearer what they need pupils to learn and in most lessons, they are appropriately ensuring that they know what is expected of them. Sometimes, however, learning outcomes for Key Stage 1 pupils need to be expressed in a more child-friendly way so they know what is expected.

The school has ensured that all pupils now have individual targets related to National Curriculum levels in literacy and numeracy. The use of these is still at an early stage. Pupils' knowledge of these targets is not yet fully secure, particularly in numeracy, and pupils have too little involvement in evaluating their progress towards these targets. The quality of marking has improved. Work is now regularly marked. There are detailed, encouraging comments. In the best practice, well-focused comments helped to move learning forward. As yet, there are few references to pupils' individual learning targets. Areas for improvement identified in the marking are not always followed up by teachers.

Despite making satisfactory progress on the specific areas of improvement, there is still much to be done to improve the quality of teaching to accelerate pupils' progress. Of the lessons seen, few demonstrated good teaching and there was some inadequate practice. In a number of lessons, pupils' attention waned as they were required to listen to the teacher for too long, and this inhibited progress. Teachers' questions were not always sufficiently probing and the most capable pupils were sometimes given work that lacked suitable challenge.

The school rightly gives a high priority to improving progress in English and mathematics, but the curriculum remains broad and balanced, and is supplemented by interesting enrichment activities such as visits to the Houses of Parliament and to the Science museum. Children feel well cared for at the school and there is sensitive support provided by staff. There are a wide range of effective intervention programmes and support for children who may have additional needs.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas of improvement:



Secure consistently good teaching that accelerates pupils' rates of progress with their learning by:

- ensuring that teachers receive the appropriate professional development to help them plan lessons which enable all pupils to make at least good progress – satisfactory
- making sure that senior leaders regularly check that the actions taken to improve the quality of teachers' lesson plans are accelerating the rate of pupils' progress – satisfactory
- ensuring that, by February half term, all lesson planning for English, mathematics and science includes tasks matched to pupils' differing learning needs – satisfactory.

Immediately secure consistent use of assessment in each class so that:

- marking makes clear to pupils how to improve their work – satisfactory
- the use of targets means that all pupils know the next steps they need to take to improve their work – satisfactory
- lessons are well matched to pupils' learning needs so that they make more rapid progress in gaining knowledge, skills and understanding – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The senior management team is now considerably enhanced by the return from maternity leave of one deputy headteacher and the appointment by the local authority of an additional deputy headteacher. This means that the team now has considerably more scope to carry out its monitoring and development role. More regular and rigorous strategies have been introduced to check the quality of teaching and pupils' standards. These are helping the senior leadership team to develop a clearer view of the school's strengths and to target areas for improvement more effectively, for example improvements in lesson planning and marking have resulted from the conscientious work of the senior leadership team. Nevertheless, to accelerate the progress of pupils, it is vital that an even stronger and more effective emphasis is given to the development of good teaching and the elimination of common weaknesses.

Middle leaders have had opportunities to work with colleagues from other schools and the local authority to develop their skills further. Through coaching and observing good and outstanding practice, middle leaders have carried out audits of their own areas of responsibility and led training to deliver improvements. Action plans are in place for each subject, but these often lack precision to target specific weaknesses in pupils' progress in individual subjects.

Governors are strongly committed to improving the school. They are determined to support and to challenge. They have already taken important steps to ensure that they are more informed about data related to pupils' progress and the workings of the school on a day-to-day basis. Through a regular standards meeting, they are



better placed to hold the school to account. They have worked very effectively to ensure a smooth process is planned for the recruitment of the new headteacher.

Build the capacity of the school's leadership by:

- building the capacity of the senior leadership team as soon as possible – satisfactory
- strengthening the leadership skills of middle managers by the end of this term, with a plan for their ongoing development for the rest of the year – satisfactory.

External support

The local authority has provided good support. There has been a range of inputs appropriate to the particular needs of the school or of individuals, for example links with an outstanding school have been established, a new school improvement partner has been appointed, literacy and numeracy consultants have worked with different members of staff, and additional finance has been made available for an additional deputy headteacher. The support has been welcomed by the school and has helped the school to make the first steps of progress. Governors have particularly benefited from the support of the link advisor in managing the recruitment process for a new headteacher.