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14 July 2010

Mrs N Yudin
The Acting Headteacher
Lyon Park Junior School
Vincent Road
Wembley
Middlesex
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Dear Mrs Yudin

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Lyon Park Junior School

Following my visit with Sue Rogers, additional inspector, to your school on 6 and 7 July 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 second 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.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – 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 and the Director of Children's Services for Brent.

Yours sincerely

Chris Wood
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Lyon Park Junior School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 6 and 7 July 2010

Evidence

Inspectors observed 12 lessons across all year groups as well as parts of lessons taught by a total of 15 teachers. Three lesson observations were undertaken jointly with the acting headteacher and the two deputy headteachers. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, the vice chair of the governing body and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors talked to children in lessons and met with 12 pupils from Years 3 to 6. Inspectors looked at a range of school documentation and scrutinised a sample of Year 5 pupils' work in English and science.

Context

The acting headteacher has been in post for two terms. She is also headteacher at the infant school that is located in the same building. A consultant deputy headteacher joined the school's leadership team in January. His contract has been extended until the end of the autumn term. The governing body has decided to consult as to whether the school should enter into a hard federation with the infant school. The governing bodies of the two schools met together for the first time on 7 July 2010.

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

Levels of attainment in all year groups remain below those seen nationally, but the gap is closing. Unvalidated results for the Year 6 National Curriculum tests indicate that attainment in English and mathematics has improved this year. The proportion of pupils achieving a Level 4 in these subjects is now closer to the national average and, as such, represents rising achievement. However, the number of pupils who attain the higher levels remains significantly below that which might be expected. Achievement in science has been improving steadily but at a slower rate. This is because the school has rightly focused its attentions on raising achievement in English. Leaders will now ensure that there is renewed focus on science and mathematics so that the improving rates of progress are consistent in each of the core subjects.

Pupils make better progress because teachers plan interesting and often imaginative lessons. Pupils say that teachers are enthusiastic and that lessons are 'fun' because they 'do lots of different activities'. For example, pupils said that they had enjoyed the practical learning in science linked to shadows, pollination and changing states. Pupils feel well supported and have frequent opportunities to share their own ideas and listen to others during well managed class or small group discussions. This sharper focus on the use of talk for learning supports the progress made by all



pupils, including those in the early stage of learning English. The pupils' positive attitudes and good relationships with each other and their teachers all contribute to the calm and productive atmosphere seen in lessons.

School leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning which was substantiated by the lesson observations undertaken during the monitoring visit. Currently, the large majority of lessons are at least satisfactory, with about half judged to be good. However, the proportion of inadequate teaching, although falling, remains too high. Leaders understand the need to tackle this issue urgently as well as increasing the proportion of good teaching seen on a daily basis. In the best lessons, teachers' questioning is used well to challenge pupils' thinking, extend their responses and encourage them to build on the ideas of others. Clear learning intentions and shared success criteria are used consistently in most lessons. These enable teachers to evaluate more precisely the impact of the learning and help pupils to understand the steps they need to take to improve their work. However, there remain too many inconsistencies. Planning does not identify sufficiently how work is to be adapted to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. In addition, success criteria are often too general. They usually enable the teacher to assess whether pupils have completed a task successfully but do not offer explicit challenge to pupils of different abilities. This limits the progress that some pupils, particularly the more able, make towards achieving their personal targets.

The school's progress tracking systems are now comprehensive, efficient and based on increasingly secure teacher assessments. The good information collected enables senior leaders to gain a much fuller understanding of the progress of groups and individuals. Recent data indicate that the majority of pupils make better progress and, in some cases, are catching up on past underachievement. However, the school recognises that the progress made by a significant minority is much slower. It has now put in place targeted interventions to support these pupils. The data are used effectively to support the regular pupil progress meetings. Teachers are now better prepared for these meetings that focus well on specific classroom-based strategies to increase pupil progress.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- raise pupils' attainment and improve their learning and progress in reading, writing and science – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Safeguarding procedures comply with statutory requirements and leaders now ensure that the school's systems are strengthened further. They have acted promptly on the recommendations identified in the safeguarding audit that was carried out shortly before the previous inspection visit. A revised safeguarding policy is now in place and there have been improvements to the procedures for keeping pupils safe and the information and training that staff receive. Although the recently formed safeguarding committee has met only once, it has already made sensible



recommendations and the school has acted on these quickly. Leaders now recognise the need to provide the governing body with additional safeguarding training. A joint safeguarding committee will meet for the first time in the autumn term to discuss common approaches between the junior and infant schools.

The governing body has a clearer understanding of which areas of the school's work need to improve. Its meetings are well attended and are now described as more 'exciting'. As a result of regular and well received training, the governing body is becoming more knowledgeable and confident. It is now better positioned to offer the necessary challenge to ensure that the school continues to improve and to monitor its key development areas. For example, the designated governor for progress and attainment meets regularly with senior leaders to analyse the most current tracking data and has interviewed middle leaders to evaluate the impact of their work. The school is now focused astutely on involving a wider range of members of the governing body in monitoring the school's progress.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- ensure safeguarding procedures comply with statutory requirements – satisfactory
- develop the role of the governing body in holding the school to account for the rate of pupils' progress and for ensuring satisfactory safeguarding procedures are in place and regularly reviewed – satisfactory.

External support

The local authority works in close collaboration with the school. Consequently, it has a clear and accurate view about which aspects of the school's work are improving and which areas need further attention. Ongoing support from the School Improvement Partner and local authority advisers and consultants has been well focused on these areas. In particular, this has been successful in helping the school to moderate its judgements on the quality of teaching and learning and providing tailored training for teachers, teaching assistants and the governing body. The impact of work undertaken to support teachers' use of assessment for learning and to enhance support for pupils in the early stages of learning English can be seen in some lessons. However, this is currently inconsistent across the school. Teachers will benefit from consolidating and developing these approaches through the follow up support that is planned for autumn term.