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17 June 2011

Ms K Golden and Ms L Diamond
The Acting Headteacher and Executive Headteacher
Broadford Primary School
Faringdon Avenue
Romford
RM3 8JS

Dear Ms Golden and Ms Diamond

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Broadford Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 15 and 16 June 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. 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 – good

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 Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Havering.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2010.

- Raise attainment and the rate of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - tracking pupils' progress more rigorously and taking action when individual pupils are not making enough progress
 - developing pupils' speaking and listening skills so that increased facility with language supports improvements of the quality of their writing
 - providing pupils with greater opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects
 - improving the partnership with parents and carers further so they can support their children's learning more effectively at home.

- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - ensuring that senior leaders and managers provide better quality and timely information to the governing body so that governors are better informed and prepared to interrogate and robustly challenge the school's performance
 - ensuring that subject leaders are proactive and rigorous in their roles, have a clear focus on pupils' progress across the school and are held more accountable by senior managers
 - making sure that the senior leadership team maintains an overview of all that happens in the school, and has a much sharper insight into pupils' progress and attainment
 - taking action to increase pupils' awareness of diversity in the United Kingdom.

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so that a much greater proportion is good or better and staff have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve by:
 - ensuring that lessons move at a brisker pace
 - setting work that is well matched to pupils' different abilities
 - increasing the level of challenge to accelerate the progress of more-able pupils.

- Increase rates of attendance and improve punctuality through continued efforts with parents and carers, include taking action against those who do not send their children to school regularly.

Special measures: monitoring of Broadford Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 15 – 16 June 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and monitoring information, met with the acting and executive headteachers, the staff, school council, representatives from the local authority and the newly appointed headteacher. The inspector also attended part of the monthly monitoring board meeting.

Context

Since the previous visit, there have been no changes in staffing, but a new headteacher has been appointed to start in September. The new building works are behind schedule and the new school will not be ready for occupation at the start of next term.

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

The school's focus on raising the attainment of pupils is having a positive effect. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn more systematically as activities they follow are more suited to their learning needs. In Years 1 to 6, although pupils' attainment remains at levels lower than nationally expected, their progress is showing signs of accelerating as they enjoy their lessons more and teaching is more finely tuned to their needs, particularly for the more able. The past work of Year 6 pupils, for example, shows a greater consistency in the way it is presented and its content shows more flair in writing and more frequent application of accurate number skills to relevant contexts. This is not consistently the case through all age groups, however, and in Years 4 and 5, pupils are not yet making the progress of which they are capable. In response, small groups of pupils in Year 5 have more personalised learning to help boost their progress in preparation for their last year in the school. In some areas of the curriculum, such as information and communication technology (ICT), pupils' skills develop more quickly, particularly through some whole-class teaching. In one activity, pupils used laptop computers successfully to devise and record questions prior to a visit to a local park the next day. In other day-to-day lessons, the use of ICT is still not exploited to the full.

At the last visit, the pupils' confidence and ability to use their speaking skills were noted as needing improvement. In some respects they have, given that pupils speak to each other willingly in partner discussions and in response to teachers' direct questioning. In the Nursery, an experiment involving watching the reaction between bicarbonate of soda and vinegar, provoked a short, but meaningful, 'I can't believe it' when it foamed out of a model volcano. In other activities, older pupils in

particular, are not always enthused to contribute at length to discussions either in front of the class or in one-to-one activities. Discussions with visitors, with some exceptions, are comparatively short.

The overall pace of learning and pupils' enjoyment of activities has improved, aided by activities better matched to their interests throughout the school. This remains an area to focus upon as there are still variations and dips in the rates of progress for pupils, particularly in Years 4 and 5, which hinders quicker gains in their attainment and overall achievement.

Progress since the previous monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Raise attainment and rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - satisfactory

Other relevant pupil outcomes

The considerate behaviour noted in the last visit continues to provide pupils with a firmer foundation in their learning and preparation for their next stages of education. Individual pupils have been supported to change their behaviour and are much more willing to engage with activities. The work of the school council in gathering the thoughts of others provides insights into where pupils want improvements. A reduction in litter and more awareness of environmental issues top their list. The behaviour of children in the Nursery and Reception classes has improved as activities are more tailored to their learning needs. For example, some children enjoyed counting the number of times classmates knocked over skittles, to help improve their counting skills. Older pupils are polite and respectful, although some of them remain more difficult to motivate at times. For a small number, their previous negative experiences of learning are taking more time to resolve and improve.

The effectiveness of provision

The proportion of good teaching has significantly improved since the last visit, and all inadequate teaching has been eliminated. Staff are responding to the raised expectations of their teaching and the revised curriculum is aiding them to be more creative in their teaching. Practical, 'hands-on' learning has been a focus and pupils comment on the positive differences this is making. Mathematical activities which have relevance or use in day-to-day situations are more frequently planned, particularly in the older age groups. As at the last visit, the pace of learning in some lessons leads to good learning. In a Year 2 activity, pupils enjoyed learning about similes related to discussion about the seaside and listening to the 'sea' in seashells. In a well-taught small-group activity for Year 5 pupils, the teacher helped pupils gain confidence in solving simple mathematical problems related to time. In other less effective lessons, teachers still miss opportunities to promote pupils' speaking skills, as often their explanations or teaching points are overly long, reducing the pupils' chances of responding. In the Nursery and Reception classes, some reorganisation

of resources and classrooms has introduced a more purposeful and calm learning atmosphere.

Higher up the school, pupils say that lessons and activities are more fun and one child's plea to learn more about Henry VIII and Elizabeth I reflect the good effect on some, but not all, pupils' motivation. Outside visits to the local park and visitors to the school, such as a steel band, are memorable events which increasingly motivate pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well within classes and in small groups. Activities are pitched at the right level and teaching assistants have the right balance of support and encouragement in allowing pupils to guide their own learning. More-able pupils are increasingly being challenged, but some opportunities are missed to give them more open-ended choices to assess their independence in learning.

Progress since the previous monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that a much greater proportion is good or better and staff have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve – good

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The acting headteacher and executive headteacher have continued to provide the much-needed stability to the work of the school. Expectations of what constitutes effective teaching are improving its quality and the regular monitoring is helping pinpoint weaknesses. The acting deputy headteachers provide clear direction in English and mathematics leadership and in assessment routines. Emerging assessment information is now used regularly and rigorously to identify which groups of pupils are performing better than others. Governors, supported by the local authority, were successful in appointing a substantive headteacher to start in September. By common agreement, decisions about other management posts and responsibilities are being delayed until next term to enable the new headteacher to be involved in the process. Inevitably this means that the leadership and management of the school, while building well on the previous visit, remain an area to examine at the next monitoring inspection. This is to ensure that decisions about internal management posts are resolved and external support starts to reduce. Governors continue to apply the right amount of both support and pressure to senior leaders. Their internal review of committee structures has provided greater clarity to their work, better information flow and greater accountability for the school's performance. They recognise, however, that the impending move to the new building and the support of the new headteacher are key milestones in ensuring the school continues its progress. The activities planned to ease the handover in leadership are well thought through.

Attendance continues to rise and is now close to average levels. Routines are now very clear, as are expectations for both pupils and parents and carers. This is reducing the number of persistent absentees and increasing overall attendance and better punctuality. Links with parents and carers continue to grow and develop, as reflected in a cooking session where parents and carers were taught how to cook healthily by outside professional cooks. This will lead on to cooking with their children involved. Issues relating to improving community cohesion were not a focus for this visit.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve the leadership and management of the school – good
- Improve rates of attendance – good

External support

The local authority continues to support the school well. A range of external advisors have contributed to helping the school improve teaching in key subjects, assessment routines and in advising about special educational needs and/or disabilities or behavioural aspects. Their support and advice to governors over resignations and appointment of a new headteacher have reduced the time the school remains under temporary leadership. They also recognise that the move to the new building and changeover in leadership are important factors in maintaining the school's momentum in improvement. The monthly board meetings now benefit from an increasing range of information which governors can use to gauge the progress the school makes, not least in raising pupils' attainment further.