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24 June 2011

Mrs Pearce-Haydon – Acting Headteacher
Mrs Hilary Loder – Consultant Headteacher
Loseley Fields Primary School
Green Lane
Godalming
Surrey
GU7 3TB

Dear Mrs Pearce-Haydon and Mrs Loder

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Loseley Fields Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 22 and 23 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 June 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection are 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 – good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers may 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 the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey.

Yours sincerely

David Collard
Additional Inspector

Annex

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

- Develop leadership throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that leaders, staff and governors share a common vision and are consistently working together to tackle key priorities with suitable plans, milestones and clear lines of accountability
 - organising a clear plan of action to bring about rapid and sustained improvement that is understood and implemented by all staff
 - ensuring that leaders and governors accurately evaluate the work of the school, especially the quality of teaching and learning.
- Raise attainment and strengthen progress, especially in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
 - sharing and developing high-quality teaching skills so that lessons move at a good pace resulting in good teaching overall
 - embedding a whole-school understanding of progress and ensuring that activities and support closely match the needs of all pupils
 - giving pupils clear guidance about how they can reach the next steps of their learning in all subjects.
- Develop and implement appropriate actions to promote community cohesion and strengthen pupils' cultural development.

Special measures: monitoring of Loseley Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 22 and 23 June 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the acting and consultative headteachers, members of staff, pupils, three members of the governing body and the local authority school improvement adviser. Informal discussions were also held with pupils, parents and carers.

Context

Since the last visit, there have been significant changes. A staffing restructure has taken place, resulting in a total reduction of 3.93 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers and 3.67 FTE support staff. A total of ten members of staff have been affected by this restructure. The process of finding new positions for these staff is continuing.

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

Pupils' overall progress has improved. As at the time of the last monitoring inspection, it is significantly better in Year 5 than other year groups, but is now also visibly improving in all other years, although not quite as strongly in Year 4. There is a better focus on higher-quality teaching, improved application to work by the pupils and very focused professional support for all staff. In the Reception class, the vibrant learning environment has improved the opportunities for children to learn and play productively. Consequently, the attainment of the youngest children has improved more than would be expected. By the end of July, their development is likely to be at least in line with that expected nationally across most areas of learning. It is strongest in their social and personal skills and in their creative and physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

In lessons, pupils enjoy their learning and settle quickly to the tasks they are set to do. In literacy lessons there is often a buzz of excitement when trying to work out descriptive language and then in writing these in stories and other texts. In a Year 6 mathematics set good progress was made when pupils enthusiastically went about trying to work out how to deploy resources as a project manager. While this all represents enthusiastic learning, there are still instances where the legacy of underachievement hinders better progress. For example, when this Year 6 group tried to work out the missing fraction in their pie graph they did not have a full understanding of working out common denominators to help them. Consequently, while progress is improving, attainment for the oldest pupils remains below that expected nationally, although the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels continues to rise. In addition, the general attainment of those in Year 2 is at least similar to that expected for their age.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are beginning to benefit from better, more focused support. In the River Centre, the specialist learning unit, pupils have work that more suits their needs. This is all, quite rightly, aimed at integrating as many pupils as possible back into mainstream education; the prime vision of this unit.

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

- raise attainment and strengthen progress, especially in reading, writing and mathematics – good.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Behaviour, particularly in lessons, is good and on occasions exemplary. Pupils show real consideration for each other and when working in small groups eagerly discuss their ideas and how to develop them. They enjoy working independently and can apply themselves well. In discussion they say that they enjoy their work more now because it is interesting and exciting, for example in Year 5 where the pupils are learning about the Titanic. In the playground they can help one another with different games and there are very few occasions of silliness. Better planning within the curriculum is helping pupils to start developing the life skills they will need, such as through technology, independent thinking and through sharing with one another. Cultural development is slowly improving, but the emphasis on improving other academic areas has restricted the pupils from a better understanding of the diverse cultures and beliefs within our own and the wider global community.

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

- develop and implement appropriate actions to promote community cohesion and strengthen pupils' cultural development – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of provision

The school's own monitoring confirms that the quality of teaching overall is improving. There are now significant instances of good teaching and learning and only a small amount that is weaker. This is due to the extensive monitoring programme that has identified those elements which restricted good learning and rapid action to ensure it is resolved. This has been closely aligned to regular assessment of pupils' performance and to making teachers accountable for their own practice in the classroom. There are some common strengths. These include the quality of relationships between pupils and adults and the improved lesson planning. This planning tries to produce tasks which engage and interest pupils and identifies ways that individual pupils are identified through on-going assessment opportunities. In one younger class, for instance, there is a list of those who are attaining at different levels and the possibility that individual pupils might do better in the lesson. Not so strong is the interpretation of this planning which does not always follow up by providing work that provides the highest level of challenge. The work for those

with special educational needs and/or disabilities is better focused. This is because the 'special education plans' developed for these pupils identify both small steps in learning and assess whether these have been achieved. The many teaching assistants do provide support for different ability groups, but sometimes they undertake work that could be completed through whole-class teaching methods and so their time is not used as well as it could be. The school is beginning to see the benefit of more consistently good teaching. Through most year groups the school's now accurate data show improved progress. Nevertheless, the proportion of pupils making progress over and above the norm is not yet high enough to overcome past underperformance and so raise attainment.

There has been a drive to rationalise curricular experiences and this is starting to have an effect on the type of work offered. It is not always linked well enough to the basic skills, but the school is monitoring its effectiveness as part of a programme to make better connections between subjects. Pupils continue to be well looked after. Comprehensive procedures are in place to ensure that pupils feel safe at school and that any family issues are dealt with quickly and effectively.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The staff are adamant that the restructuring has been handled sensitively, particularly by the acting headteacher. Her determination to make the right improvements and the high level support provided by the consultant headteacher have meant that there has been good improvement since the last monitoring inspection across a number of different areas. Weaker teaching is all but eliminated and pupils are much clearer about what is expected of them and how they can achieve this. Good internal structures are being embedded, such as regular monitoring of teaching, a review of the statutory policies and strengthening of the leadership process. Self-evaluation of the level of improvement against the key issues shows many are well on the way to being completed within the given timescales. As a result, a rise in pupils' achievement, both academic and personal, is becoming more evident through the school. The leadership has been innovative in using the expertise of teachers to help others improve their practice. For example, there is some effective team teaching and reorganisation of classes which have meant that individual strengths have been better utilised. In addition, parents and carers have been kept informed of developments and, in discussion, were pleased with how the school was moving forward.

Members of the governing body have continued to improve their expertise. There are regular meetings to look at strategic development and how well improvements are becoming embedded. Members have also been highly involved in the restructuring process and in helping to monitor the finances of the school. While this is not all complete, members of the governing body are well aware of their responsibilities and what needs to be done to ensure that the school is on a stable footing as soon as possible.

Senior leaders are also continuing to develop their own expertise through becoming more involved in the decision-making process. For example, they have been at the core of teacher assistant restructuring and the assistant headteacher has taken on more responsibility for further developments within the River Centre. This distributive leadership is providing good professional development for these staff so that they are able to play an active role in the future.

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

- develop leadership throughout the school – good

External support

The local authority continues to provide good support to the school through regular visits by the school improvement adviser and formal meetings at a senior level to monitor progress towards being removed from special measures. The consultant headteacher provides a high level of expertise and support to the acting headteacher and has been instrumental in developing the strategic direction. There have been some good links made with other schools, both to look at support for teaching but also to celebrate some of the achievements that have been made so far. It is small changes such as these which are not only helping improve the school but also in improving the self-esteem of staff.