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18 November 2011

Miss Pearce-Haydon
Acting Headteacher
Loseley Fields Primary School
Green Lane
Binscombe
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Dear Miss Pearce-Haydon

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Loseley Fields Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 November 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 third 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 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 – 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 Fields Primary School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 16–17 November 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher, members of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. Informal discussions took place with some parents and carers, pupils and others connected with the school.

Context

Since the last monitoring inspection, a major restructure of the staff has successfully been completed. All those who were affected have now found jobs either within the school or elsewhere. Some teachers now work with different year groups and there has been a significant reduction in the number of support staff that work within each class. As the systems have stabilised so the school receives less support from the external consultant headteacher.

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

The progress of many more pupils is now at least satisfactory. The school's data show that an increasingly higher proportion made the expected progress through the latter part of the last academic year, most noticeably in Key Stage 1 and in Years 5 and 6. This is borne out by the national test results for 2011. For example, in Key Stage 1 pupils gained above average results when compared to other schools nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Key Stage 2 results have shown an upward trend from 2010 but, while broadly average, still remain below the national average percentages in English and mathematics. Progress was slower in Years 3 and 4 but is improving this term. Further improved progress is evident in the work from this term. For example, pupils in Year 5 complete work very much at the age-expected level and often apply knowledge that they have previously gained. Some of the descriptive writing in Years 5 and 6 is both engaging and grammatically correct; something which was not the case at the last visit. As a result, pupils demonstrate that more of the previous underachievement is being eliminated. The school is acutely aware that the level of challenge for pupils, appropriate to their age, is sometimes missing, such as in Years 3 and 4 and with some of the statemented pupils in the River Centre. When this happens, lost ground is not made up as quickly.

In the Reception class, improvements have continued. The targets for attainment were met and exceeded by the end of July 2011 and, particularly in writing, the children were well prepared for Year 1. Those presently in the Reception class have settled well and, due to well-targeted activities and intervention, all groups make at least satisfactory progress across most areas of learning. The school has rightly given a high priority to social and emotional development so that these younger children share, play and discuss their ideas well together. Many practise and experiment with their writing and use their number skills to count to ten, such as when they were looking for hidden treasure.

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

There is a noticeably calmer atmosphere within lessons, the playground and when pupils move to different areas. This is because a lot of work has successfully been done to raise pupils' self-esteem, in their willingness to participate and in valuing each other. Consequently, pupils are equipped with improved life skills that prepare them well for future learning. This is apparent in their books which are generally well presented. They have a new found pride in their school and want to see it and themselves succeed. Behaviour is generally good although not always perfect. There are only a very few occasions where it disrupts the learning of the majority. There is still a small hard core of behavioural issues but these are diminishing as better intervention is provided and more parents and carers work in partnership with the school. Nevertheless, pupils say they feel safe and their own perception is that the staff are friendly and supportive. Relationships between adults and pupils are very relaxed and positive. Pupils' cultural understanding is improving and developing. Provision in this area has been stepped up through an audit and evaluation and through staff and members of the governing body monitoring its effectiveness. A recent trip to France by older pupils was successfully completed and they confidently talked about the differences between there and the United Kingdom.

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 – good.

The effectiveness of provision

Since the restructuring of the staff, teaching is consistently improving the quality of learning of pupils and the reduced number of support staff use their time well. Evidence from both the school's own monitoring, and from the monitoring inspection

indicates that many more lessons are good. Planning focuses on raising the level of challenge for different groups and, at its best, such as in Year 2, there are strong links both to what has gone before and to the levels that pupils presently work at. Activities are then set accordingly. In a literacy lesson, for example, the lower and middle abilities had to write about their characters while the higher ability group had to think in their writing about a completely different character. Where planning and delivery are not so strong, this level of challenge is not as apparent. For example, in one lesson, the work did not take account of the level and age of the pupils when working on the terms 'longer, shorter, bigger and smaller'. Consequently, there was some confusion and pupils did not get the most out of the activity. Marking is of better quality. Again, there are still some inconsistencies but generally there is a balance of praise, support and development.

Many of the improvements in teaching have come about through good professional development, cross-class planning and a well-structured mentoring system. While teachers have always tried to make work relevant and interesting, this is monitored more closely to ensure that the activities are linked to new learning and that any gaps in knowledge from the past are plugged. While this is still taking time to become sustained, a new sense of confidence is building among the staff as their own practice is seen to bring about the benefits it should.

Strong pastoral support is offered to both individual pupils as well as families. Rapid identification of need or potential child-protection issues are then followed up by good partnerships with the full range of external agencies. A recent questionnaire suggests that these systems are working well and are highly valued by parents and carers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The acting headteacher has provided a strong level of stability through her increasingly competent style of leadership. The self-evaluation and improvement plan is realistic, achievable and has been communicated well to all those responsible. Good support is still being provided by the consultant headteacher but this is now much more of a mentoring role. The acting headteacher is being competently supported by other members of the senior leadership team, who are all improving elements of their own strategic understanding of leadership. Consequently, a good start has been made on distributing responsibilities more equitably. As a result, other staff understand the role they need to play in ensuring the school becomes fully effective. Monitoring of teaching continues to be a priority so that the remaining inconsistencies in pupils' learning are eliminated.

The governing body has taken good external advice and is beginning to monitor the whole-school provision more effectively. For example, some members have provided written feedback about the improvements against the key issue concerning community cohesion while others evaluate the financial models for the future

budget. Members of the governing body are now rightly working on ensuring a substantive headteacher is appointed as rapidly as possible to ensure the school has the capacity to sustain the improvements it has made to date and ensure that the school is removed from special measures within the required timescale. They are on course to achieve this.

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

- develop leadership throughout the school – good

External support

Support provided by the local authority continues to be good. Timely interventions have been made, such as a review and subsequent support for the financial management of the school. This has secured the budget and provided the governing body with a detailed analysis upon which it can take decisions. The local authority is providing good support for the impending process for appointing a new headteacher and the leadership structure that should follow this.