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16 January 2013

Mrs Helen Pearson
Interim headteacher
De Bohun Primary School
Green Road
London
N14 4AD

Dear Mrs Pearson

Special measures monitoring inspection of De Bohun Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 15 January 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2012.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the interim headteacher, deputy headteacher, Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and two representatives from the 'Rapid Recovery Group'. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plan for raising achievement were evaluated.

Context

Since the inspection in October there have been several staff changes. The headteacher left and the school was led by the headteacher of a local primary school until the interim headteacher took up her appointment in January. Three teachers left at Christmas, and one more is due to leave at half term. Two teachers have joined the school on temporary contracts. Three teaching assistants have left the school and not been replaced, although a new early years practitioner has joined the

school. There has been some reorganisation of classes and some teachers have moved to different year groups.

The school has entered into a soft federation with a nearby outstanding secondary school and close partnership with a local primary school which are both part of the Teaching Schools Alliance. The local authority has established a 'Rapid Recovery Group' to check that the school's actions are helping it to improve. Made up of key governors and invited members with expertise and experience in education, it is chaired by the headteacher of the secondary school with which De Bohun is federated.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The school has set off on the right track to secure improvements. Much change took place during the autumn term to restructure classes and move teachers around to strengthen Year 1. Training for staff, supported through the expertise of staff from the partner schools, has been followed up with rigorous monitoring. The school's action plan is a working document subject to review and change as actions are evaluated. Its focus on improving teaching is clear, although targets set in relation to pupils' achievement could be more challenging to help them catch up more quickly.

Governors acknowledge that some of them would benefit from further training for their role but their commitment to the school is in no doubt. They are keen to accept support and advice to build their capacity to hold the school's leaders accountable. They are learning to ask the right questions now that they are given more information about the pupils' performance. Plans to develop their own action plan and to sharpen the focus of governors' visits to school are at an early stage of development.

The local authority responded with urgency to provide stable leadership for the school and to resolve personnel issues. A high level of support from consultants has enabled key staff to begin to develop their leadership roles and to contribute to the school's action plans. Action had already been taken to strengthen the skills of the governing body and, since the inspection, the 'Rapid Recovery Group' has been set up to drive improvements and provide challenge to the school's leaders.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's action plan is fit for purpose, although it would benefit from clear cross references between the different sections. This would make it easier for leaders to evaluate the impact of the actions.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, and the Director of Children's Services for Enfield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jane Wotherspoon
Her Majesty's Inspector