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13 February 2013

Mr Kevin Burns
Headteacher
Toner Avenue School
Johnston Avenue
Hebburn
Tyne and Wear
NE31 2LJ

Dear Mr Burns

Special measures monitoring inspection of Toner Avenue School

Following my visit to your school on 12 February 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 November 2012.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the chair, vice chair and three other members of the interim executive board and two representatives of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plans were evaluated.

Context

The school is in the process of recruiting a deputy head teacher and three middle leaders. The headteacher is currently supported by an associate headteacher. One teacher is on long-term absence and is being covered by a temporary teacher. The local authority has recently replaced the governing body with an interim executive board.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The headteacher, with extensive support from the local authority, has responded rapidly to the judgement of the recent inspection. He is starting to take effective

action to address the points for improvement identified in the last report. For example, a more rigorous system for collecting and analysing data about pupils' progress is now in place and current school information indicates that achievement is rising.

The local authority statement of action and the school improvement plan link together well to provide a clear vision of how to move the school's overall effectiveness to good. The local authority's statement of action is detailed, includes challenging but achievable success criteria, and indicates that substantial resource is being provided to support and guide the school in improving both leadership and teaching and learning. The school improvement plan focuses clearly on the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report and contains targets for raising the standard of teaching and improving pupils' progress. Performance management procedures have been linked to the national teachers' standards and specific performance objectives have been introduced. All teachers now have an individual support plan to improve their teaching.

The capacity of the leadership team will be increased significantly next term with the appointment of a deputy headteacher, subject leaders for English and mathematics, and a leader for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The local authority has recently replaced the governing body with a smaller interim executive board which includes some members of the previous governing body. This group is proving more effective at both supporting and challenging the school's senior leaders.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

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 Interim Executive Board and the Corporate Director Children, Adults and Families for South Tyneside. The letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

David Brown
Her Majesty's Inspector