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24 January 2014

Ms Harsha Patel
Headteacher
Copenhagen Primary School
Treaty Street
London
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Dear Ms Patel

Special measures monitoring inspection of Copenhagen Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 23 January 2014, 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 September 2013.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, two members of the Interim Executive Board and two representatives from the local authority. In addition, Her Majesty's Inspector toured the school with the headteacher, spoke with pupils and looked at their workbooks. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

Since the previous inspection, there have been substantial changes to staffing. Currently, there is a supply teacher in Year 1 and the deputy headteacher is teaching full time in Year 5. The governing body has been dissolved and an Interim Executive Board has been established.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The headteacher is committed to securing the best possible outcomes for the pupils at the school. She has the vision, determination and an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school improvement plan has sensible priorities and is informed by accurate monitoring of the school's work. The plan includes appropriate actions, milestones and success criteria for judging progress.

Senior leaders agree that achievement remains low. In particular, pupils in Key Stage 2 have some way to go before they can catch up on the skills and concepts they have missed in the past because of poor teaching. Scrutiny of some pupils' workbooks, during the learning walk revealed evidence, in both English and mathematics, of low standards of presentation and incomplete work, with a number of examples of pupils not getting beyond copying out the date and learning objectives. Senior leaders are employing a range of strategies to accelerate pupils' progress, including setting pupils by ability in some Key Stage 2 classes, small-group teaching, and a range of intervention groups. Senior leaders are aware that the capacity of middle managers to move their teams forward is variable, many of whom are new to their role and at an early stage of monitoring their areas of responsibility. This is a significant barrier to improvement.

The Interim Executive Board is newly formed but shares the headteacher's vision for the school and her commitment to improving standards. The Interim Executive Board is led by an experienced and knowledgeable Chair of the Interim Executive Board. Members understand the school's performance information and are making good use of this to challenge and hold school leaders to account. They rightly recognise the urgency of eradicating inadequate teaching and strengthening leadership so that the school can improve at the necessary pace. The school complies with the latest requirements for safeguarding.

The statement of action produced by the local authority is appropriately focused with the school's key issues having been drawn into an appropriate set of priorities. The headteacher has the full support of the local authority and can call upon its resources as she needs to. Local authority advisory staff are working alongside teachers, providing valuable support that has been well received by the school. The school's progress is being appropriately monitored through project group meetings.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's 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 Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Islington. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria

Her Majesty's Inspector