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15 May 2014

Ms Harsha Patel
Headteacher
Copenhagen Primary School
Treaty Street
London
N1 0WF

Dear Ms Patel

Special measures monitoring inspection of Copenhagen Primary School

Following my visit with Jeremy Loukes, additional Inspector, to your school on 12 and 13 May 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in September 2013. 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.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

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

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Islington.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September 2013

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching so that none is inadequate by:
 - all teachers, assisted by additional adults in classes, accurately assessing pupils' work and using this information to plan lessons that match the needs of individual pupils
 - reducing the time that pupils listen to adults and increasing the time for them to work by themselves or with others
 - ensuring that teaching is of a brisk pace and fully engages pupils in activities that motivate them to do their best at all times
 - ensuring that work is planned so pupils can practise their skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and information and communication technology.

- Raise pupils' achievement in English and mathematics throughout the school by ensuring that:
 - targets in English and mathematics are challenging and regularly reviewed by pupils and teachers, and this information is used directly to inform the next steps of learning and teaching
 - pupils' progress is monitored and tracked closely so that those at risk of underachievement are quickly identified and appropriate action is taken to address these concerns
 - pupils have time to respond and to act upon teachers' written and oral feedback to improve their work
 - pupils are given more challenging work in mathematics to develop their problem-solving abilities and to apply skills in meaningful investigations in other subjects
 - teachers and additional adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage place greater emphasis on planning and assessing children's achievement in language, communication and mathematics.

- Improve pupils' behaviour by:
 - taking effective and firm action to ensure that inappropriate behaviour and racist or homophobic incidents are not repeated
 - ensuring all incidents of misbehaviour are monitored thoroughly, and appropriate actions are agreed and rigorously followed up to prevent unacceptable behaviour
 - ensuring lessons involve pupils in their learning so they do not become bored and misbehave.

- Improve attendance and punctuality by:
 - working more closely with parents and carers, especially those who take their children away from school in term time, to improve rates of attendance
 - review arrangements at the start of the day to ensure pupils are

punctual for school and ready for lessons.

- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
 - establishing professional links with effective local schools so that exemplar practice is modelled and brought back to lessons and to leadership systems throughout the school
 - implementing a timetable with regular checks on the quality of teaching with a greater focus on pupils' progress, taking swift action if progress is not rapid enough
 - improving the school's improvement plan by including tight timescales for the completion of actions and identifying governors' responsibility in evaluating success in these areas
 - making sure the governing body uses accurate information to hold senior leaders and staff to account for improved rates of pupils' progress and teaching that is at least consistently good
 - making sure that the checks on staff performance at all levels holds them to account to achieve the priorities in the school improvement plan to the agreed timescales.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 12 and 13 May 2014

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, the interim deputy headteachers, two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and two other members, and two representatives from the local authority.

Context

Since the previous monitoring visit, the deputy headteacher has left the school. Two deputy headteachers from local schools have been seconded along with the Inclusion leader to fill the post of deputy headteacher. Three teachers also left the school. Three long-term supply teachers have been recruited to work at the school. A substantive deputy headteacher and three class teachers have been appointed for September 2014.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Children in the Nursery class are developing their language and independent skills well because of the positive interactions with adults, who ask sensitive questions to promote talk. Children have many opportunities to choose activities or extend their own learning through purposeful play. Children in the Reception class have access to an attractive outdoor learning environment and a range of learning resources. Planning identifies what is expected to be learned from adult-led tasks but is not so clear on what children should learn from the play they initiate themselves. Opportunities to develop children's language through dialogue are missed because children have to work on their own for too long without any support from adults.

Since the last monitoring inspection, school leaders have reviewed the standards attained by different groups of pupils. The school's information shows that, although attainment is rising in Years 2 and 6, too much variability remains in other year groups. The school's checking information indicates concerns regarding the rate of pupils' progress in a number of year groups, hampered by the number of changes in teachers. Particularly concerning is the progress pupils are making in writing in Year 5. The most-able pupils, together with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are capable of making much faster progress, especially in mathematics. The school is using information about the progress of different groups of pupils to set challenging targets and direct intervention in writing and mathematics. Although there are some early indications of improvement for some pupils, such as those with special educational needs, there is no notable evidence of the accelerated progress required for others.

The quality of teaching

Teaching is improving as a result of the focus by the headteacher. Nevertheless, there is not enough consistently good and better teaching. Very occasionally, teaching is inadequate. As a result, the progress that pupils make varies across subjects and year groups. Teachers now work much more collaboratively. This has improved the quality of lesson planning and is also helping to ensure that pupils in different classes receive a more consistent curriculum experience. Lesson plans now accommodate individual pupils' different abilities much more closely. However, although teachers' lesson plans are better, not everyone has the skills necessary to deliver these improved plans successfully.

Classrooms have a good range of displays which promote learning and provide useful information to support pupils' learning activities. For example, displays provide reminders about punctuation, interesting vocabulary and mathematical processes. Useful reminders about National Curriculum levels appropriate for their age and ability are glued into pupils' books. This information helps teachers and pupils to keep track of measurable achievements and rates of progress. Teachers' marking is frequent and supportive of pupils' efforts. Their written comments are often informative about pupils' achievements, but too often, pupils do not consistently amend the errors or practise the corrections.

Relationships between adults and pupils in lessons are positive. The best teaching is lively, engaging and has high expectations of work and behaviour. Tasks are practical and collaborative work helps pupils to link challenging concepts. Work in these lessons is focused carefully on the pupils' individual learning needs and is well directed and managed. Scrutiny of pupils' workbooks in Year 2 and 6 indicates teachers are increasingly providing pupils with the opportunity to use their knowledge of number to solve more difficult problems.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is improving. They have an increased sense of pride in their work and the school. They recognise the changes taking place and are pleased with them. Most pupils are polite and are keen to work with others when given the opportunity. In lessons, most pupils remain attentive, even when their work is not suitably challenging. In the playground, pupils play together well. Pupils in Year 6 who were interviewed by inspectors all said that behaviour throughout the school had improved and, as a consequence, their learning had improved. Leaders have also concentrated on putting rigorous systems and procedures in place to promote good attendance. As a result, the school has made significant progress in improving the attendance because it has focused closely on reducing the persistent absence of individuals. A variety of rewards for good attendance are in place which have encouraged a positive attitude to improving attendance from the vast majority of pupils.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The headteacher, together with interim senior leaders, is beginning to establish a clear focus and direction for the school, which is starting to raise morale, of both staff and pupils. The headteacher has adopted a coaching model by working alongside senior and middle leaders to ensure that all are confident and able to observe lessons and provide accurate feedback to staff. Consequently, senior leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Senior leaders are determined in changing the culture of the school to focus firmly on learning. This is beginning to have an impact. Changes have begun, most notably in challenging inadequate practice and providing support to overcome weaknesses by increasing training opportunities.

In addition, senior leaders are developing a better view of the performance of pupils who are at risk of underachieving through the introduction of the pupils' progress meetings. These are held by the senior leadership team to discuss the progress of individual targeted pupils from each class and to suggest strategies to improve these pupils' performance. These are all positive developments.

Governance has been strengthened and, as a result, more challenging questions are being asked of senior leaders. The interim executive board rightly recognises the urgency of eradicating inadequate teaching and strengthening leadership so that the school can improve at the necessary pace.

External support

The external support provided to the school has been effective and well-targeted. The local authority continues to provide good assistance to the school through, for example, the support of consultants and advisers, and training and support for members of the interim executive board. The local authority has regularly carried out monitoring visits and met with school leaders and members of the interim executive board to rigorously evaluate the school's progress. There is now more extensive joint working with two local outstanding schools. These links enrich pupils' subject experience and help to boost developments across the school.