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Ms Jacqueline Treacy
Interim Headteacher
Edgware Junior School
Middlesex
HA8 9AB

Dear Ms Treacy

Special measures monitoring inspection of Edgware Junior School

Following my visit with Martin Marsh, Additional inspector, to your school on 1 and 2 July 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 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 November 2013. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter.

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

The school is not making reasonable progress toward the removal of special measures.

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

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers 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 Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Barnet.

Yours sincerely

Ann Debono
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- **Improve the quality of teaching so that more is good and none is inadequate, by:**
 - ensuring teachers demonstrate clearly to pupils what they want them to do and to learn
 - ensuring all pupils, including the most able, are always given challenging work which meets their different learning needs, and so that they all concentrate and behave well
 - adapting work within lessons so that work increases in difficulty at an appropriate rate
 - providing consistent support for all groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, those who arrive at times other than the start of Year 3, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
 - expecting pupils to check their work for careless errors and to complete their work to a high standard
 - making sure that pupils take immediate action in the light of teachers' oral and written advice on how to improve their work.
- **Raise achievement in reading, writing and mathematics, by:**
 - providing greater opportunity for pupils to use and extend their literacy and numeracy skills to support their learning in other subjects
 - ensuring that pupils take care with their handwriting and make use of skills such as their knowledge of sounds and letters to help them with their reading and spelling
 - increasing pupils' knowledge of hundreds, tens and units and their ability to apply what they have learned when solving problems.
- **Increase the impact of all leaders, including the governing body, so that teaching and learning and pupils' achievement improve swiftly, by:**
 - increasing the rigour in checking up that teachers are following guidance given in whole-school policies and on the quality of their individual teaching
 - ensuring there is a robust system for monitoring pupils' patterns of behaviour
 - making sure that self-evaluation is accurate and that plans to improve the school show the expected impact on pupils' achievement.

An external review of governance and pupil premium should be undertaken.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 1 and 2 July 2014

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documents. They met with members of the senior and middle leadership team, pupils, and members of the governing body. Discussions were held with the headteacher of the new primary school due to open in September 2014 and a representative from the local authority. Informal discussions were held with parents and carers at the start of the school day. Inspectors visited all classrooms and reviewed documentation with senior leaders, including pupils' work, pupils' performance information, and attendance and safeguarding information. The school improvement plan and local authority statement of action were evaluated.

Context

Significant changes have occurred since the first monitoring visit. The junior school will close in August 2014 and a new primary school will open in September 2014. The headteacher of the infant school has been appointed as the new headteacher, from September.

Further significant staffing changes have occurred since the last visit in February. Six teachers have left; this includes all three teachers in Year 6 and one teacher in each of the other year groups. Agency staff cover three classes, the local authority seconded two experienced class teachers, and the deputy headteacher teaches a class part time. In addition, staff with responsibility for physical education (PE), music, one of two learning mentors and leaders with responsibility for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language have left.

Achievement of pupils at the school

While achievement is improving it is still too inconsistent. Pupil performance information and work in English and mathematics books shows some pupils are now achieving more strongly. In Year 3 and Year 5 the majority of pupils are making reasonable progress. However, too few pupils catch up quickly enough to make up for historically poor teaching and learning. In Year 4 achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is inadequate. In every class, leaders have identified pupils achieving poorly. This underperformance is over-represented by pupils who speak English as an additional language, boys and those who are supported by additional government funding, known as the pupil premium. This information is not addressed in teachers' plans. It is also not used when monitoring the quality of teaching and learning which means some leaders' judgements about pupils' achievement are over generous.

School leaders, however, continually challenge teachers and year group leaders for better outcomes. One strategy to promote stronger achievement is through pupil progress meetings. In this forum the achievement of individuals is closely scrutinised. Additional interventions are put in place as a result. Some extra support is having an effect on pupils' progress. Pupil premium funding is used to improve basic skills in reading, number and writing. This financial resource is tracked closely by governors and leaders. It is having an impact; analysis shows the gap between those in receipt of this additional funding and others is beginning to close.

Year 6 unvalidated test results show improved attainment in reading and mathematics compared with 2013. Nevertheless, attainment in writing is likely to be below the government recommended floor standard. When they were in Year 5, the most able mathematicians were identified, they continued to receive specialist teaching in Year 6. As a result, for the first time pupils entered the higher Level 6 mathematics tests.

The quality of teaching

Teaching has improved since the last visit because inadequate teachers and those not committed to acting on feedback and support have left. However, some replacement teachers are not skilled enough. Observations show some teachers have weak subject knowledge and others struggle to manage pupils' behaviour. Inadequate teaching is still evident. Teaching does not consistently meet pupils' different learning needs, particularly those who speak English as an additional language. Teachers and assistants use computer tablets, pictorial prompts and word banks to help pupils understand lessons and learn English fluently but in the absence of clear guidance these pupils often flounder or receive inappropriate work. The Ofsted report in November identified that pupils should be given the opportunity to use literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Scrutiny of work in pupils' science and topic books indicates this is still inconsistent. There is insufficient written work in other subjects, particularly in science.

Teachers have benefited from well-considered training and development. They visit local outstanding schools, some receive intensive peer support, and consultants for reading, mathematics and experienced leaders model effective practice which is beginning to show more frequently in teaching. Where practice is stronger, activities are pitched correctly, pupils are keen to learn and they participate well in problem-solving or writing tasks. The new approaches to reading, involving more interesting books and better questioning techniques, have helped improve pupils' comprehension skills. Reading is now stronger than writing or mathematics.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour has improved because of the more robust systems introduced by the interim headteacher. Teaching occurs with fewer interruptions and pupils are able to work in groups more effectively than previously. However teachers do not

consistently challenge the abilities and needs of all pupils and so they can become bored and disengaged. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and the more able are not consistently challenged or guided in lessons. In too many instances they are passive, waiting for help or more work to complete.

Pupils report positively about new changes to behaviour around the school and at playtimes. The playground is large and some areas are obscured by trees and buildings. More adults have now been deployed to supervise children and wear 'high-viz' jackets. Pupils say these supervisors help them play safely and help them to solve any problems they encounter.

The school behaviour and incident log is well maintained and managed. Leaders rigorously follow up incidents of repeated misbehaviour. Pupils told inspectors there was little name calling. The school is culturally diverse. It is noteworthy that pupils could not recall incidents of racism, in fact they commented about how well they get on together. Older pupils enjoy their responsibility as language buddies for newly arrived children who speak the same home language.

Attendance and punctuality have improved because robust systems are in place. Attendance is in line with national averages. For example, financial penalties are issued when parents take their children out of school for a holiday, regardless of their absence record. Risk assessments of the school's premises are thorough. Governors follow up on areas of concern such as shared car and pedestrian access to the school gate.

The single central record meets statutory requirements. It is well maintained by the school and monitored by the governing body. School leaders and staff have strong awareness about safeguarding pupils. They show extra vigilance due to the high number of temporary teachers.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

A high staff turnover has negatively impacted on the school's capacity to secure rapid and consistent improvement to standards.

Since the last visit teaching, pupils' achievement and behaviour have improved but are still too inconsistent. Senior leaders are uncompromising in monitoring the school's work and, supported by governors, inadequate practice and poor leadership have been addressed. Many staff have left. The consequence of these much needed actions, together with uncertainty about the school's future, means too many temporary teachers and too few experienced leaders remain to drive improvement.

Senior and middle leaders remain very committed to positive educational experiences for pupils during the junior school's last term. Governors are watchful and vigilant as pupils transfer to Key Stage 2 in the new primary school.

Since the last visit governors have developed their skills and expectations. They have devised a monitoring plan to check the school's work against agreed milestones; they visit frequently and scrutinise the use of the pupil premium funding. Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and acknowledge the school has not improved as fast as they wish. Parent governors are now more involved in ascertaining the views of the local community and they are more confident to challenge school leaders about the pace of school improvement.

Governors have worked with the new primary school headteacher and local authority to recruit leaders for September. They plan to reconstitute the governing body into a smaller board. Governors told the inspector they learnt much about developing their strategic responsibility through their governance of a school subject to special measures. They are committed to carry the same degree of challenge into their work as governors of the new school.

External support

Following the first monitoring visit, the local authority statement of action was deemed not fit for purpose. It was immediately revised and rewritten. The implementation of this more detailed document and increased frequency of monitoring review meetings mean that the local authority monitors the school's work more robustly and commissions specific external support to address emerging findings.

The school receives a high level of support from the school's link adviser and additional consultancy. This has assisted staff expertise to moderate pupils' work, to monitor standards and to develop teachers' skills in English and mathematics. Senior officers secured the secondment of two teachers from local schools to help leaders address the critical situation of staff mobility. The local authority has supported and guided the federated governing body to open the new primary school in September 2014.