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30 January 2015

Belinda King  
Interim Headteacher  
Kobi Nazrul Primary School  
Settles Street  
London  
E1 1JP

Dear Mrs King

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Kobi Nazrul Primary School**

Following my visit with Gill Walley, Additional Inspector to your school on 28–29 January 2015, 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 June 2014. 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 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 Tower Hamlets.

Yours sincerely

Gaynor Roberts  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in June 2014**

- Raise achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by increasing the proportion of good or better teaching through:
  - using assessment information to plan effective lessons which match pupils' abilities and provide suitable challenge
  - making sure that teachers check pupils' progress carefully in every lesson
  - monitoring pupils' workbooks to ensure they are marked well
  - checking that pupils have time to improve their work by responding to teachers' comments
  - rigorously monitoring lessons and providing developmental feedback and training to teachers so that expectations are raised
  - making lessons more interesting and engaging
  - improving the acquisition of communication skills by planning exciting activities that identify specific vocabulary to be developed
  - ensuring phonics is taught well so pupils have precise knowledge of sounds and letters to apply to their reading, writing and spelling.
- Improve behaviour and safety by:
  - ensuring the school's behaviour policy is consistently applied and evaluating its impact so that poor behaviour and bullying are eradicated
  - improving the management of pupils' behaviour at break times.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
  - ensuring that all leaders and managers receive support to develop the skills necessary to be effective in their roles
  - introducing rigorous assessment procedures to ensure early identification of need and measuring the effectiveness of any interventions
  - making sure that subject leaders analyse the achievement of all groups of pupils regularly to identify key priorities for rapid improvement
  - establishing clear priorities for school improvement and producing a plan of action so that everybody understands what is to be done, by when and by whom
  - using the information gathered through monitoring and evaluation to identify the next steps for improving provision and outcomes
  - rigorously holding teachers to account for the implementation and impact of agreed actions
  - ensuring that governors have the skills to challenge and support senior leaders in raising achievement and tackling underperformance.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 28 and 29 January 2015**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the interim headteacher and other leaders, a group of pupils, teachers, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and representatives from the local authority. They also looked at samples of work in pupils' books.

### **Context**

Since the first monitoring inspection, the interim executive board have appointed two senior leaders who took up their posts in January 2015. These are a full-time deputy headteacher and a part-time leader for inclusion. The substantive headteacher continues to be absent from school, and a new interim headteacher took up post in January 2015. One teacher has left the school, and another is now on maternity leave. Suitable cover arrangements have been made for these classes.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Just prior to the first monitoring inspection, leaders completed assessments of all pupils in Years 2–6 in order to identify a secure starting point from which progress could be measured. In October 2014, pupils in Year 1 were similarly assessed. All pupils were re-assessed in December 2014, and progress from the September starting points calculated. Leaders ensured that these assessments were secure by undertaking a considerable checking exercise alongside local authority officers. Information from these assessments shows that pupils are making progress. Standards are starting to rise. However, the rate of progress varies across the school. Leaders have correctly identified that weaker areas include mathematics, pupils with special educational needs, and some specific year groups.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have also been assessed. Leaders have identified that these assessments need further work in order to ensure they are accurate and reliable.

Rigorous systems have been put in place to assess pupils' attainment and track their progress on a regular basis. These systems also enable leaders to compare the progress of groups of pupils, for example those who are disadvantaged, boys, girls or those with special educational needs. The school has used the first set of information in order to make adjustments to their improvement planning. For example, it has recognised a need to strengthen teaching in mathematics in order to improve progress across all year groups.

## **The quality of teaching**

During the autumn term, the consultant interim headteacher and local authority officers undertook a range of activities to check the quality of teaching and identify key priorities for improvement. Areas of significant underperformance have been addressed. Leaders have an accurate knowledge of where stronger and weaker practice lies. Overall, however, the quality of teaching remains variable.

A range of training opportunities have been undertaken, with a focus on the elements of good teaching and learning. Teachers are responding positively to this training, but their application of what they have learnt is erratic. Therefore, the impact on pupils' learning is inconsistent. An exception is in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make), which has improved as a result of specific training in this area.

A whole-school policy for the marking of work, providing constructive feedback to pupils, has been implemented. The policy is starting to have an impact in English books, with many teachers providing helpful comments which help pupils to improve their work. In other subjects, however, books are often marked in a cursory fashion, and pupils are not advised on how to improve their work. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that they do not always have time to respond to comments or questions posed by the teacher through marking.

Where teaching is stronger, teachers devise motivating lessons with a clear structure and activities are planned appropriately for pupils of different abilities. Where teaching is weak, teachers do not always ensure that pupils have the resources they need to undertake a task. At times, lessons are disjointed and pupils are not clear what they are learning, or what the task is. Teaching assistants are not used effectively to support pupils' understanding but sit and wait whilst the teacher directs the whole class.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

At the start of the autumn term, leaders worked together with pupils, staff and the interim executive board to revise the behaviour policy and procedures. The revised policy is now in place, but the procedures are not fully embedded and therefore inconsistencies remain. Pupils are aware that expectations in this area have been raised.

A system has been introduced for reporting and recording any incidences of inappropriate behaviour, enabling leaders to analyse information and identify particular areas of concern.

The role of midday supervisors has been reviewed, and they are now more proactive in engaging with pupils, and in dealing with inappropriate behaviour. The school has

invested in resources to support purposeful activities in the playground. Unsafe areas and resources have been removed or adapted to ensure the safety of pupils at play. Pupils say that behaviour at break times has improved, and that they feel safe in school.

During lessons, pupils attend well and engage in learning. They are keen to learn and respond positively where teachers have high expectations. Pupils are polite and courteous to staff and other adults visiting the school.

Attendance is currently below average. Year 6 are attending very well, but other year groups do not attend as often.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

During the autumn term, the consultant interim headteacher correctly identified key priorities and stabilised the school. Alongside the interim executive board, she developed community links by keeping parents informed of developments, and gained their confidence. She provided basic information for parents and carers, and established routines within the school for both staff and pupils. She ensured that health and safety issues were addressed and focused on improving the poor behaviour that was evident at the time of the last inspection. Consequently, staff could start to focus on their teaching and pupils on their learning.

Having identified a need for increased capacity within the leadership team, the consultant interim headteacher worked with the interim executive board, supported by the local authority, to secure two key senior appointments.

During the autumn term, middle leaders were actively involved in the development of plans, and in supporting improvements in their assigned subject areas. This reduced their capacity to focus on their own teaching. With the increased leadership capacity from January, and a sharper focus on the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms, their leadership responsibilities have been realigned to reflect this.

The consultant interim headteacher introduced a robust system for performance management of teachers and support staff. Staff members are clear what they need to do to improve, and how this relates to their career progression. This system has been further strengthened since January as the new interim headteacher has introduced personalised training plans for teachers.

The interim executive board was keen to ensure that the introduction of new senior leaders had a positive impact on the school. The strategy of bringing in new leaders at the same time created the desired effect, and staff recognise that the pace of change has increased further since the start of January.

The school's plan for improvement is comprehensive and ambitious. It correctly identifies key priorities which are closely aligned to those identified in the previous inspection report. The plan would be strengthened by the re-evaluation of some timescales which are over-ambitious. In addition, the plan does not identify who will check that actions have had the desired impact, and when they will make these checks.

The interim executive board provides strong support and a high level of challenge for leaders. Its members have worked very effectively with the local authority and senior leaders to secure a base from which the school can grow. Each member of the board has a specific role relating to their expertise in finance, analysis, teaching or leadership, enabling them to work efficiently as a team.

The external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding has been completed and is considered in meetings which check the school's overall development.

### **External support**

The significant level of support provided by the local authority has continued. Local authority consultants work alongside teachers in order to model good practice and provide bespoke training. The local authority has brokered further support from a local cluster of schools. This partnership enables good and outstanding practitioners to share their practice and promote elements of good and better teaching. There is a clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of teachers and those providing support. As a result, teachers know what they need to do in order to improve.

Local authority officers have provided continuity for the school community of pupils, parents and staff through a period of turbulence in the senior leadership team. They have ensured that improvements continue despite changes in personnel. The local authority provides effective support for the interim executive board in ensuring that the school remains focused on the key areas for improvement, and in securing the appointment of experienced senior leaders. A senior local authority officer is a member of the interim executive board, which promotes consistency across all stakeholders.

Local authority officers carry out regular monitoring visits which support the development of both teachers and leaders. They also endorse the work of senior leaders when addressing weak performance.

With the appointment of the interim headteacher from January 2015, a local authority headteacher consultant has been identified to provide regular weekly support and challenge.