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30 November 2011

Miss Jill Brown
Headteacher
Hasting Hill Primary School
Tilbury Road
Sunderland
Tyne and Wear
SR3 4LY

Dear Miss Brown

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Hasting Hill Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 28 and 29 November 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2011. 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 and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – inadequate

Newly Qualified Teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted 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 Executive Director for Children, Schools and Families for Sunderland.

Yours sincerely

Tom Grieveson
Her Majesty's Inspector

September 2011



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2011

- Accelerate the rate of pupils' progress and improve their achievement by:
 - raising the expectations of what all pupils can achieve
 - providing the most-able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities with activities which are closely matched to their abilities
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to solve problems
 - improving pupils' attendance.

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning, support and intervention by:
 - ensuring that assessment information is used systematically to identify need and plan learning
 - increasing the pace of learning to increase pupils' level of engagement
 - ensuring pupils receive clear guidance through marking and feedback on how to improve their work.

- Ensure that leaders and managers at all levels have greater impact on the school's effectiveness by:
 - ensuring that the governing body fulfils all statutory responsibilities and holds the school to account by using performance data rigorously to monitor and challenge its work
 - ensuring that all safeguarding requirements are fully met
 - increasing the rigour of the systems used to monitor teaching and learning so that there is a well-established cycle that includes clear feedback and support to develop the quality of teaching
 - developing a well-planned curriculum that meets the needs of individuals and groups
 - using data analytically to monitor the progress of pupils.

- Accelerate the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - providing a wider range of interesting, exciting and challenging activities, particularly outdoors
 - ensuring adults use assessment information effectively to plan the next step in each child's learning
 - implementing a robust action plan to eradicate weaknesses in provision.

Special measures: monitoring of Hasting Hill Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 28 and 29 November 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with pupils, the headteacher and temporary executive headteacher, middle leaders, teachers, the Chair and vice-Chair of the Governing Body, the parents' representative, an officer from the local authority and the National Leader in Education who is supporting the work of the school.

Context

At the previous monitoring inspection, the school's deputy headteacher was acting headteacher. She returned to her substantive post in early September 2011 and is now teaching a Year 5/6 class covering the absence of the class teacher. A highly experienced former headteacher was appointed as temporary executive headteacher in September 2011 and he will remain in post until the end of this term when the position will be reviewed. The substantive headteacher returned to her post at the end of October 2011 following a 12-month period of maternity leave. A National Leader in Education from Town End Primary Academy and her staff are working to support the school's improvement.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

Published results from the 2011 national tests and assessments confirm that attainment is low at Key Stages 1 and 2 and pupils make inadequate progress, particularly in English. At Key Stage 1, pupils' scores declined in reading, writing and mathematics compared to the previous year. Few pupils reached the higher Level 3. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment declined sharply in English and mathematics compared to the most recent published scores in 2009. Relatively few reached the higher Level 5. Girls outperformed boys at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, girls' attainment was higher than boys at Level 4 but boys did better at Level 5 in mathematics. Those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities had low scores at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities showed weak performance in English. Those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals performed particularly well in mathematics.

The school has recently conducted a series of tests and assessments in English and mathematics for all pupils. Results highlight marked differences in pupils' progress and attainment in different year groups and between subjects. While there are signs of improvement at Key Stage 1, there is significant underachievement at Key Stage 2 in subjects and between groups of pupils. The absence of formative school-wide assessment practice results in some teachers lacking an incisive understanding of what is required to drive pupils' learning and close the deficit in their knowledge and skills.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Accelerate the rate of pupils' progress and improve their achievement – inadequate

Other relevant pupil outcomes

In lessons, the majority of pupils continue to behave well, enjoy school and have positive attitudes towards learning. They relate well to each other and are confident when working with their peers. Pupils continue to feel safe and consider that new safety measures at the entrance to the school make them feel more secure. They express confidence in staff to support them when difficulties arise. They enjoy the new rewards system and say that it encourages them to work hard. The continued focus on improving attendance is resulting in average levels this term, although differences between classes remain.

The effectiveness of provision

All teachers were observed during the inspection. While there has been some improvement in teaching, too much remains satisfactory and not enough is good, particularly at Key Stage 2. Required changes in teaching quality to accelerate pupils' progress and sustain momentum are not happening quickly enough.

Teachers have adopted the school's revised lesson planning format. Objectives are clearly stated and, in most cases, a range of activities are planned for various groups of pupils. Too often, however, these activities, while they might be different, are not matched closely enough to pupils' needs and this is putting a brake on progress, particularly in parts of Key Stage 2. This occurs because the school lacks a system for conducting routine, on-going evaluations of pupils' learning. Consequently, when teachers are preparing lessons there is insufficient insight and up-to-date awareness of what pupils require so that learning can be driven forward at the pace required to close the substantial gaps in their knowledge and skills. At Key Stage 1, teachers are generally more adept at providing activities for pupils which do build on prior learning because their evaluations of pupils' on-going needs are more secure. While the outcomes of recent tests are helpful in identifying where pupils need to improve, they are not sufficient to support teachers to plan learning over time so that lesson activities can build progressively on pupils' achievements.

At Key Stage 1 and parts of Key Stage 2, teachers' time in lessons is mostly targeted to good effect to support groups and individuals based on their knowledge of where their input is most required. In some Key Stage 2 classes, while teachers are giving more thought to their role after the start of lessons, for some their impact in promoting learning is less pronounced because not enough thought has been given to which groups would benefit most from their involvement.

Teachers' marking is improving but lacks consistency. At best it is diagnostic, providing accurate feedback to pupils about how to correct errors in their work. However, the focus on

how pupils can improve is not routinely established in practice and remains an important task to be accomplished.

Work to improve the curriculum has not started.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning, support and intervention – inadequate

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The appointment of the temporary executive headteacher has brought much needed strategic capacity to the work of the school. There is now a forthright recognition of the school's strengths and weaknesses and monitoring systems are becoming established. These are contributing directly to staff's understanding of where improvement is required and underline the executive headteacher's determination to ensure there is a shared accountability and responsibility for improvement. Nonetheless, his involvement is relatively recent and there has been insufficient time to accelerate the pace of change necessary to catch up with the planned cycle of actions. Actions taken during the summer term to tackle the school's weaknesses were mostly ineffective and have resulted in too much slippage against the action plan. Some important actions, including the remodelling of the curriculum, have not been started.

The impact of other leaders on school improvement has been variable. While there are some well-intended actions and much effort, for example, to improve pupils' attainment in mathematics and to augment provision for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the impact of other initiatives is limited. Consequently, the school has not progressed as far as it should and remains too reliant on external support.

The executive headteacher has ensured that governors are better informed about the school's progress and is welcoming of their greater involvement and the sharper challenge this represents. They have benefited from bespoke training. This has given them a clearer understanding of their roles and the better flow of information is helping them to establish a clearer understanding of the school's performance. The appointment of additional governors to broaden their capacity is well timed. Safeguarding matters have been addressed satisfactorily.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure that leaders and managers at all levels have greater impact on the school's effectiveness – inadequate

Early Years Foundation Stage:

Better coordination in both Nursery and Reception in the way staff plan and deliver learning shows notable improvement. Adult roles in supporting children's learning are carefully planned, when directing activities and in supporting those originating from the child's

interests. Each aspect of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is planned for in detail and coupled to diagnostic, daily evaluations of children's progress, which in turn is informing further planned learning. These factors are contributing directly to the better progress being made by children. The outdoor space now provides a genuine extension to the indoor areas and is treated as an integral resource. The coordinated usage of the outdoor facilities between Nursery and Reception is clear and has become embedded so that learning opportunities are being maximised to a far greater extent than previously. The need to consolidate and build on these gains is well understood by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and staff.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Accelerate the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage – satisfactory

External support

The school continues to benefit from well-matched support from the temporary executive headteacher, the local authority and from the National Leader in Education and her school. Local authority evaluations are accurate and insightful. The mapping of progress and slippage against planned actions is based on a thorough knowledge of the school's performance. The school remains overly dependent on these external sources for support and guidance. The executive headteacher's temporary role in supporting capacity building within the school will be reaffirmed by governors and the local authority prior to the end of term.