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30 November 2010

Mr Gary Nott  
Executive Headteacher  
Crowlands Primary School  
London Road  
Romford  
RM7 9EJ

Dear Mr Nott

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of Crowlands Primary School**

Following my visit with David White, additional inspector, to your school on 9 and 10 November 2010, 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in May 2010. 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.

Newly Qualified Teachers may be appointed subject to contact and discussion with HMI.

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 Director of Children's Services for Havering.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2010**

- Take action immediately to provide training for all staff in child protection and enhanced training for the designated person(s) that meet statutory requirements.
- Carry out comprehensive risk assessments of hazards on the school site and for all activities.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance, by:
  - ensuring whole-school policies and procedures are comprehensive, reviewed appropriately and implemented effectively
  - sharing responsibilities for leadership and management more widely so that all managers can have greater impact on school improvement
  - improving the effectiveness with which systems for tracking pupils' progress are managed and the information shared with teachers
  - monitoring teachers' planning more effectively so that essential components are consistently included.
- Raise pupils' attainment through improved teaching, so that 75% or more is consistently at least good and attainment is broadly average in all subjects by September 2011, by:
  - making full use of assessment information to ensure higher expectations in lessons and increased challenge for all pupils
  - ensuring that activities match the abilities of the pupils
  - improving teachers' marking and the use of targets to ensure that all pupils are aware of how they can improve.
- Reduce persistent absence so that it is no higher than the national average by April 2011.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Crowlands Primary School**

### **Report from the first monitoring inspection on 9 and 10 November 2010**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work over two days, scrutinised documents and met the executive headteacher, a range of senior and middle managers, pupils, governors and representatives from the local authority. A range of school documents was scrutinised. Pupils were observed at break times and generally around the school.

#### **Context**

Since the previous inspection, the local authority has brokered a soft federation with a successful local school. The headteacher of this school has become the executive headteacher at Crowlands Primary for one day a week. A new deputy and assistant headteacher took up their posts in September 2010. The headteacher was absent during the inspection.

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

The 2010 Key Stage 1 results indicate improvements in writing and mathematics at Level 2+. There were, however, declines in attainment in all three subjects at Level 3+ especially in reading. At Key Stage 2, results at Level 4+ in both English and mathematics rose to a five-year high. There were important improvements at Level 5+ in English and science, although mathematics remained broadly static. Across the school, pupils' progress is variable and inconsistent. For example, pupils capable of a faster pace of learning and more demanding work are insufficiently challenged. Consequently, their progress is limited.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is generally good particularly when teaching is at least satisfactory and sharply focused to their needs. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning although their enthusiasm and motivation diminish when lessons are over directed by teachers. Movement around the school is generally orderly, and pupils are polite and friendly. The school has not been successful in reducing the levels of persistent absences. The number of pupils who are persistently absent has now increased. Although the school has been working with the education welfare officer, monitoring of absence is not rigorous. For example, first-day absence calls are not made.

Progress since the last inspection:

- Reduce persistent absence so that it is no higher than the national

average by April 2011 – inadequate.

### **The effectiveness of provision**

Teaching is improving as a result of the focus of the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher. Most emphasis has been put, rightly, on raising the quality of teaching in English and mathematics and it is here that the most improvement can be seen. There is a greater consistency in the use of planning, learning objectives and learning outcomes by teachers that has led to some improvements in lessons. Further improvements in practice are seen in the way teachers are beginning to evaluate their lessons. 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.

In the less effective lessons, teachers are not always skilled in planning learning that challenges pupils in their thinking and enables them to take more control of their learning. Pupils are, too often, all working on the same task, with little differentiation for differing abilities. Tasks are not readily adapted if pupils do not respond as expected. In particular, teachers spend too much time talking, allowing insufficient time for pupils to develop their speaking skills or explore issues for themselves and consolidate their understanding. There is insufficient focus on key vocabulary, or on explaining terminology. Helpful aids for learning, such as word walls or pupils' individual targets, are not referred to consistently during lessons. Marking in books is regular and encouraging and gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve further.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have access to an attractive indoor learning environment and a range of learning resources. However, this is not reflected in the outdoor area. Activities are thoughtfully planned, but opportunities to develop children's language through dialogue are often missed because children have to work independently for too long without sufficient support from adults. Additionally, teaching assistants do not always pose focused questions in order to challenge children sufficiently, and to develop children's speaking and listening skills. The school's chosen scheme for the teaching of early reading, including systematic phonics, is not being implemented with the rigour necessary to ensure that children get a good start in this vital area.

Assessment data are not used sharply enough to identify strengths and weaknesses across the school. The performance of different groups is not analysed in the depth necessary to ensure school improvement actions are prioritised. Although the school is now setting individual pupil targets in English and mathematics and collecting better-quality information on individual pupils' progress, teachers are not using this consistently enough to plan lessons that address individual pupils' needs.

Progress since the last inspection:

- Raise pupils' attainment through improved teaching, so that 75% or more is consistently at least good and attainment is broadly average in all subjects by September 2011 – inadequate.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

The headteacher has ensured that pupils work in a calm and tidy environment. Although progress has been made since the last inspection in a few areas, little has been accomplished in others. The quality of teaching and learning, and the progress pupils are making have not been rigorously checked. During this monitoring visit staff and parents expressed concerns about the headteacher's communication skills, inconsistencies with which policies have been implemented, and incomplete and fragmented plans. Staff morale has been low. Consequently, the school has been unable to progress at the rate it should.

The executive headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post for less than a term. Together they are beginning to establish a clear focus and direction for the school, which is beginning to raise staff and pupil morale. The resources, expertise and experience available within the federation have been wisely and appropriately utilised. These senior leaders are resolute 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 remedy weaknesses, setting up clear systems for tracking pupil progress and increasing training opportunities.

The school's procedures for safeguarding are secure. Checks on new staff are carried out correctly and recorded well. Training for all staff in child protection and enhanced training for the designated person now meet statutory requirements. Risk assessments of hazards on the school site and for out-of-school activities are satisfactorily carried out. Governance is strengthening and more challenging questions are being asked of senior leaders. Governors rightly recognise the urgency of eradicating inadequate teaching and strengthening leadership so that the school can improve at the necessary pace.

Progress since the last inspection:

- Take action immediately to provide training for all staff in child protection and enhanced training for the designated person(s) that meet statutory requirements – satisfactory.
- Carry out comprehensive risk assessments of hazards on the school site and for all activities – satisfactory.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance – inadequate.

## **External support**

The impact of the implementation of the local authority's statement of action is currently satisfactory in the area of health and safety and safeguarding. It is inadequate in the remaining areas. In these areas, the right support and advice has been delivered, but local authority staff have not been robust in taking action when they considered that improvement on the school's part has been slow or inadequate.

## **Priorities for further improvement**

- Improve the teaching, learning and assessment of early reading skills, including systematic phonics, by ensuring the school's chosen scheme is rigorously implemented.