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24 January 2011

Mr A King  
Headteacher  
Thornbury Primary School  
Dick Lane  
Bradford  
West Yorkshire  
BD3 7AU

Dear Mr King

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

Following my visit with Mrs Jennifer Platt additional inspector to your school on 26 and 27 January 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in July 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 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 Director of Children's Services for Bradford.

Yours sincerely

Mr John Coleman  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

January 2011



## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 13 and 14 July 2010**

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress in learning in Key Stages 1 and 2, and in all subjects, by:
  - ensuring that all teaching promotes consistently good learning
  - making lessons more challenging, particularly for pupils of middle and high ability
  - ensuring that all teachers use the assessment of pupils' attainment to plan lessons more effectively
  - providing better guidance for pupils on how they can improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of senior leaders, by:
  - ensuring that monitoring and evaluation systems accurately identify the school's strengths and areas for development and lead to effective strategies to tackle weaknesses
  - developing more robust systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- Enable middle managers to be more effective in tackling underachievement, by:
  - ensuring that they have an accurate picture of the school's performance
  - providing them with further training to develop their leadership and management skills
  - giving them more opportunities to monitor teaching and learning and to tackle weaknesses, by holding other staff to account.
- Ensure that the governing body holds the school to account more fully for the quality of provision and outcomes for pupils.

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

### **Report from the first monitoring inspection from 26 to 27 January 2011**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and safeguarding records, examined school data and met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and representatives of the local authority.

#### **Context**

Since the last inspection, there have been significant staff changes to teaching and non-teaching personnel. Currently, six classes are taught by temporary teachers. The deployment of teachers at the beginning of this academic year resulted in a number of changes to the class teachers for some year groups. For example, none of the Year 1 teachers were deployed in Year 1 in the previous academic year. Restructured roles have been established for some of the senior leaders resulting in three phase responsibilities spanning the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 (phase 1), Year 2 and Year 3 (phase 2) and Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 (phase 3). The governing body was dissolved by the local authority and an IEB established on 9 December 2010. The IEB provides strategic governance for the school. The local authority provides a range of educational consultants to support the school's improvement plan. A School Specific Monitoring Group (SSMG) has been established by the local authority to monitor the school's improvement. The membership includes the headteacher, Chair of the IEB and local authority officers.

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

School data show pupils to be making improved progress in their learning. Leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning supports this view. The school's evaluation, taking into account leaders' observations of lessons, the outcomes of teachers' assessments and scrutiny of pupils' work, shows improvements in pupils' progress and a rise in their attainment. Inspectors judge that some improvement has been achieved. However, the pace of this improvement is insufficient. Inspection evidence shows that the progress made by pupils in lessons is too slow to enable them to close the achievement gap quickly enough, so that the standards reached by age 11 are high enough. The school's data and evidence from leaders' observations of lessons are overgenerous. Work in pupils' books reveals some improvement to the rate of progress, but this is inconsistent across different classes and subjects.

## The effectiveness of provision

Leaders in the school, with guidance from the local authority, have undertaken a large number of lesson observations to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, training has been targeted at eradicating any inadequate teaching and improving the proportion which is good. Some improvement has been achieved with individual staff who have responded well to opportunities for development. The willingness of staff to embrace improvement was clear throughout this inspection. Inspectors' observations in lessons show that pupils are very well behaved, show interest in lessons and engage enthusiastically in the activities provided for them. Teachers are well organised and make effective use of the many support staff so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are suitably guided. However, the rate of progress made by pupils in lessons is not improving fast enough. The expectations which teachers have for the amount of learning which can be achieved by pupils in lessons are too low. The level of challenge provided for pupils is not always well matched to pupils' prior learning and has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. Teachers' use of assessment is underdeveloped and it does not inform their planning of lessons sufficiently well. In this regard, there is little or no improvement. Teachers' marking of pupils' work has improved due to the increased application of the school's policy. Consistent use of the agreed marking code is giving pupils better guidance about how to improve their work. This is now linked more closely to the targets set for pupils' attainment.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress in learning in Key Stages 1 and 2, and in all subjects – **inadequate**

## The effectiveness of leadership and management

Progress to improve the structures and systems by which senior leaders can improve the school's provision has been too slow. The lines of accountability to hold leaders to account for their performance, at all levels, are not securely in place. The introduction of phase responsibilities hinders leaders' ability to monitor and evaluate the provision and outcomes for pupils efficiently. Extensive monitoring of lessons has been achieved but the recording format used is variable and the accuracy of some judgements questionable. Inspection analysis of the records of this monitoring shows judgements which are sometimes inconsistent with the recorded evidence. Follow-up recommendations are not always completed and subsequent monitoring of further lessons does not always build on the previously identified points to improve. Leaders' attempts to improve some individual teachers' performance show some success. Efforts to improve the overall rate of pupils' learning and progress have been insufficiently rigorous or effective.

The targets set by the school's leaders to raise standards are too low. Improvement plans put in place by middle leaders contain targets which do not always match with the targets set by senior leaders. Furthermore, the targets in the local authority's plan are also out of line with both of these. This clearly shows a lack of communication. Overall, the

effectiveness of senior leaders shows inadequate improvement and urgent action is needed to rectify these deficiencies.

Middle leaders have an improved monitoring role. Senior leaders have provided training to increase middle leaders' skills to monitor teaching and learning and to analyse data showing pupils' progress. Pupil progress meetings are held regularly. However, evaluations from these meetings are insufficiently robust. No formal written records are kept. Consequently, there is a lack of whole-school coherence and the outcomes of year-group monitoring do not have a sufficient impact on the aims of the school's plans to raise standards. Ineffective line management systems prevent middle leaders from holding other staff to account satisfactorily.

Decisive action has been taken by the local authority resulting in the dissolution of the governing body and the establishment of an IEB. The board has suitable experience including several members with significant educational expertise. Minutes of the two meetings held so far show a sound start has been made. Working groups are in place to monitor the school's performance.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on areas for improvement:

- Improve the effectiveness of senior leaders – **inadequate**
  
- Enable middle managers to be more effective in tackling underachievement - **inadequate**
  
- Ensure that the governing body holds the school to account more fully for the quality of provision and outcomes for pupils – **satisfactory**

## External support

The local authority provides suitable external support for the school. The School Improvement Partner gives effective challenge to the school's leaders and he is well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision. A wide range of consultants and advisers are providing training for school staff and this is improving the range of skills which they need to improve the school's performance. The action plan is fit for purpose and gives a useful steer to the school's leaders. However, targets set for improvements to pupils' attainment are too low and officers are in agreement with reviewing these immediately.

## Priorities for further improvement

- Urgently review the structure of senior leaders' roles and responsibilities. Ensure that clear lines of accountability are put in place to hold all leaders to account for their performance.
- Ensure that all monitoring outcomes and all plans for improvement contribute effectively to the whole-school drive to raise the standards of pupils' attainment quickly.