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4 March 2011

Mrs G Denham  
The Headteacher  
Marish Primary School  
Swabey Road  
Langley  
Slough  
Berkshire  
SL3 8NZ

Dear Mrs Denham

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

Following my visit with Jane Chesterfield, Additional Inspector, to your school on 2 and 3 March 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 third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in December 2009. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection are 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 – good.  
Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed with prior agreement of the monitoring 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 Slough.

Yours sincerely

Elisabeth Linley  
Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in December 2009.**

- By July 2010, raise the standards in English and mathematics in Year 2 so that at least 80% of pupils achieve the age expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics and in Year 6, at least 65% of pupils achieve the age-expected levels in English and mathematics combined by:
  - identifying pupils who are underachieving and providing rigorous support for them
  - ensuring that teachers and leaders regularly monitor all pupils' progress and adapt their lessons accordingly
  - providing focused subject training for staff, especially in mathematics, to help raise the level of challenge for pupils.
- Ensure pupils in all age groups are making consistently good progress by teachers:
  - providing good levels of challenge in all lessons
  - using assessment data well to refine planning of every lesson in the light of what has gone before
  - telling pupils what they have learnt, what they need to do next and how to go about it.
- Develop the expertise of all leaders so that they can play a full and active role in whole-school developments and thus raise pupils' achievement.
- Take steps to raise levels of attendance to the national average level by March 2011.

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

### **Report from the third monitoring inspection on 2 and 3 March 2011**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with senior leaders, project leaders, teachers who are new to the school, supply teachers and other members of staff. They also met with pupils on the school council, a group of governors that included the chair of governors, and a representative from the local authority.

#### **Context**

There have been a number of staff changes since the time of the last monitoring visit. One permanent member of staff has left the school; a member of staff has taken maternity leave and one of the deputy headteachers is absent owing to ill health. Other staff remain absent with health issues or are on maternity leave; long-term supply teachers are being used to cover these absences. Permanent staff appointments have been made and include: a class teacher who is newly qualified; the temporary positions of two of the three assistant headteachers become permanent from 1 April 2011; and, a teacher with leadership responsibilities joins the school at the start of the summer term. Pupil numbers remain constant and the proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school at different times of the year is beginning to decrease. Other changes include some internal modifications to the building which have created a number of additional small rooms. These rooms are for: support work with pupils; an information and communication technology (ICT) technician; and, a deputy headteacher. Marish Primary has also been awarded funding to manage the Slough Children's University which includes the management of the coordinator's role and the wider links involved.

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

The school's data show that pupils' accelerated progress in English and mathematics is making a positive difference in raising attainment. This is particularly evident in Year 6 and exemplifies the consistently good or better teaching and learning in these subjects for pupils in this age group. For some Year 6 pupils, the progress they have made since the beginning of the school year is exceptional and this has helped them make up for learning they have lost in previous years. Improvement in Year 2 is also clear with more pupils being predicted to reach the higher Level 3 by the end of the school year than seen previously. This focus on improving pupils' learning is central to the school's work for all year groups. Work is now better tailored to meet individual pupils' needs in writing and one-to-one tuition is provided for many pupils to improve their reading. Other intervention groups are provided, for example, as observed in mathematics when pupils benefited from the expertise and effective

teaching of a higher level teaching assistant. Where pupils' progress is just satisfactory in reading, writing or mathematics, it often reflects when there has been some disruption to teaching. However, all teachers, including supply teachers, work hard to take on board new approaches to the curriculum, for example with 'Big Writing', so that pupils' skills and abilities improve at a faster rate. As a result, pupils are beginning to enjoy writing more; as one boy in Year 6 said, 'Now writing is more fun, it is becoming my favourite subject.'

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

- by July 2010, raise the standards in English and mathematics in Year 2 so that at least 80% of pupils achieve the age expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics and in Year 6, at least 65% of pupils achieve the age-expected levels in English and mathematics combined by:
  - identifying pupils who are underachieving and providing rigorous support for them
  - ensuring that teachers and leaders regularly monitor all pupils' progress and adapt their lessons accordingly
  - providing focused subject training for staff, especially in mathematics, to help raise the level of challenge for pupils – good.

### **Other relevant pupil outcomes**

The impact of the school's work to improve pupils' personal development and behaviour is exemplified by pupils' attitudes to learning and their positive behaviour as seen in lessons and around school. In Year 2, for example, pupils worked well in pairs and as part of a team, while being respectful of others' views, as they considered issues to do with healthy eating. The school council has responded equally well to responsibilities given to it, for example in working with staff on projects such as anti-bullying, and pupils on the council feel that bullying is not an issue in school now. Pupils continue to value the range of clubs that are available for them. The timing of a number of clubs has been well planned by senior leaders to engage pupils who might otherwise be late to school or who do not attend on a regular basis. Such strategies, along with rewards, the celebration of pupils' good attendance, and the improved engagement with parents, have made a real difference. This is exemplified by pupils' attendance which is much improved and the fact that pupils' lateness to school has been reduced.

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

- take steps to raise levels of attendance to the national average level by March 2011 – good.

### **The effectiveness of provision**

Improvements made in the quality of teaching are being maintained, particularly in English and mathematics. Strengths of good and better teaching include effective questioning of pupils and the provision of challenging activities that are well tailored

to the pupils' different needs. In an outstanding literacy lesson in Year 6, when pupils considered how someone might have felt in an air raid during the Second World War, the teacher had high expectations for the pupils to achieve well and they did. The challenge was set to provide good-quality sentences within a set time that conveyed emotion. As a result, suggestions such as 'the adrenalin rushed furiously through his veins' captured effectively the emotion that might well have been felt at that time. In some lessons more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently well and pupils' writing skills are not consistently developed across different subjects. Nonetheless, teachers have developed improved skills to engage pupils better in their learning and this has made a positive difference to the progress that they make.

The teaching of music and physical education is covered by specialist teachers and in these subjects planning is carefully focused on the development of pupils' skills. This is not routinely the case in other subjects such as geography, history, design technology and ICT. In such lessons, planning does not always ensure that teachers make the best use of time, that more-able pupils are challenged well enough or that there is a clear focus on developing pupils' subject-related skills. Leaders and managers already have this in hand. A new appointment has been made with the specific remit to work with staff to develop a whole-school approach to the curriculum. The effective approach to planning and provision, already established in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is to provide the platform for this work which, as in the Reception and Nursery classes, is to be underpinned by the pupils' needs and interests.

The systems used to track pupils' progress continue to develop at a good pace. Data are collected and recorded in meticulous detail to show the progress that pupils make over time. Meetings between teachers and senior leaders explore how much progress individual pupils have made and whether it is enough. Information is gathered and analysed on different groups of pupils to see if they are achieving as well as they could and action is taken where this is seen not to be the case. Interventions are then planned to help boost achievement and the impact of such interventions is carefully scrutinised to see if they need to be adjusted in the future. The impact of this work is seen in the improved progress that pupils are making.

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

- ensure pupils in all age groups are making consistently good progress by teachers:
  - providing good levels of challenge in all lessons
  - using assessment data well to refine planning of every lesson in the light of what has gone before
  - telling pupils what they have learnt, what they need to do next and how to go about it – good.

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

The school benefits from the outstanding leadership and management provided by the headteacher, who is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Both are clear about the school's strengths and where further improvement is needed. A key strength of their work is the empowerment of others and, as a result, the willingness of all staff, including supply teachers, to play their part in bringing about change. Leaders at all levels are gaining in confidence, as demonstrated by those who lead projects such as the 'parent reader helper project'. This better involvement with parents is supported wholeheartedly by governors who recognise the continued importance of parent groups and the parents' contribution to pupils' improved attendance and attainment. The school's work towards the Investor in Families award is underpinned by staff, governors and parents alike.

Governors continue to receive training that is relevant to their individual roles and plans are in place to support their self-evaluation as a governing body. Strategies to monitor the school's work are being developed. For example, governors visit school and report on their findings, and subject leaders now make presentations to the governing body. Such actions enable the governing body to maintain a better overview of action taken while also developing subject leaders as they become more accountable for their subject and outcomes for pupils.

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

- develop the expertise of all leaders so that they can play a full and active role in whole-school developments and thus raise pupils' achievement – good.

## **External support**

External support has been maintained to meet the school's changing needs. In particular, financial support provided by the local authority continues to facilitate the work of the School Improvement Partner who is a National Leader in Education. This partnership, and that established by the school's local authority adviser as a governor, is clearly valued by the school.

## **Priorities for further improvement**

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across a range of different subjects.
- Ensure that more-able pupils are challenged to achieve as well as they can in all lessons across the curriculum.