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28 March 2011

Ms L Oddy  
Headteacher  
St George's Primary School  
St George's Road  
Hull  
HU3 6ED

Dear Ms Oddy,

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of St George's Primary School**

Following my visit with Mary Lanovy-Taylor, additional inspector, to your school on 24 and 25 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 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 – satisfactory

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 Kingston upon Hull City of.

Yours sincerely

Mr Tony Painter  
**Additional Inspector**

January 2011



## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 20 October 2010**

- Ensure that all groups of pupils achieve as well as similar groups nationally in reading, writing, mathematics and science by eradicating inadequate teaching and significantly increasing the proportion that is good by:
  - consistent matching of activities to the needs of pupils, especially the more-able
  - developing pupils' speaking and listening skills
  - providing more opportunities for independent learning.
  
- Develop self-evaluation across the school so that leaders and managers at all levels have a clear picture of the achievement of different groups of pupils and a better understanding of the impact of actions taken to bring about improvement by:
  - leaders and managers at all levels taking responsibility for their work and using assessment data analytically
  - the governing body holding the school fully to account.

## **Special measures: monitoring of St George's Primary School**

### **Report from the first monitoring inspection from 24 to 25 March 2011**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher and other staff, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.

#### **Context**

Since the last section 5 inspection, a teacher on a temporary contract has joined the school to work in the Nursery during a maternity leave. There have been new appointments to the governing body, including a new Chair. The school has formed a collaborative partnership with another primary school.

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

The school's 2010 Year 6 national test results confirmed the last inspection's findings that school's attainment had continued to fall. The proportions of pupils reaching the nationally expected levels were significantly below average in both mathematics and English. Overall progress made by these pupils through Key Stage 2 was significantly below average.

Action taken by the school to accelerate progress by improving teaching is having a positive impact. Lesson observations show better rates of learning because teachers are now setting more-challenging work. Pupils respond well to opportunities to think hard and express their own ideas.

Improved assessment systems are now giving a more-accurate picture of how well pupils are doing. The most recent data show that the previous decline has been halted and most pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress. Pupils are generally making the best progress in mathematics, as a result of the school's greater focus on this area. Analysis of the relative progress of different groups of pupils shows that none are making significantly weaker progress. However, pupils' progress in writing remains weaker than that in other subjects.

Some pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities are making accelerated progress as a result of well-targeted support. Throughout the school there are elements of good progress; this is helping pupils to catch up past underachievement. In some classes and subjects, for example in Year 6, overall progress is now rapid and targets have been set that exceed the standards reached last year. However, these remain well below those found nationally, particularly in the proportions on target to reach the higher levels of attainment.

## **Other relevant pupil outcomes**

Relative strengths in the school's promotion of pupils' development, identified in the last inspection, have been maintained. Pupils' attendance remains above average, their behaviour is frequently good and they show awareness of how to keep safe and healthy.

## **The effectiveness of provision**

The school has established a number of important factors that are associated with effective teaching and has shared these with all staff. Most teachers are now making good use of these agreed strategies and this is leading to improved teaching. In particular, most lessons are securely planned to the school's system and make useful references to clear learning objectives and success criteria. These help pupils to understand how well they are doing and, increasingly, what they need to do to improve further. This is often assisted by increasingly consistent approaches to marking. In most lessons there is greater attention to promoting pupils' independence and pupils clearly show greater self-reliance, for example, in organising their equipment and materials.

Improved assessment systems are helping teachers to plan activities for groups of pupils at different ability levels. As a result of this, most lesson plans include reference to these groups and the lessons include structured work. However, the implementation remains inconsistent. In the best lessons, tasks are carefully tailored to give the right level of challenge at different levels to ensure all pupils' good progress. In weaker lessons, tasks are not sufficiently structured to help pupils with different levels of understanding to make progress. Too often tasks for different groups are too similar, with higher-attaining pupils simply asked to do more. In some lessons, teachers have not considered carefully enough the underlying skills needed to succeed in the tasks. Some opportunities are missed to present more open-ended and challenging activities to promote independent thinking, particularly of more-able pupils.

Strategies to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills are becoming securely established in school and are showing good impact. Lessons frequently contain useful opportunities for the pupils to discuss their work. In some lessons, teachers use these well to promote pace in learning, for example, in getting pupils to discuss issues with a partner and report back after a very brisk period. Many teachers and support staff effectively question pupils to extend their thinking. Plenary sessions in most lessons give pupils opportunities to reflect and articulate how well they have learned. Pupils of all abilities show increased confidence in expressing their ideas. However, weaker lessons still have longer periods where teachers do most of the talking and the pace of learning drops.

Successful action is being taken to tackle a number of weaknesses in the curriculum that were identified in the last inspection. Teachers are planning a wider and more-relevant range of experiences for pupils and giving them improved access to information and

communication technology. Activities such as French and the Brass Band are enlivening and increasing pupils' enjoyment of learning.

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

- Ensure that all groups of pupils achieve as well as similar groups nationally in reading, writing, mathematics and science by eradicating inadequate teaching and significantly increasing the proportion that is good – satisfactory.

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

Senior leaders have introduced new and improved assessment systems that are giving a much clearer picture of how well pupils are achieving. Teachers have undergone training that has improved their ability to assess pupils' attainment. As a result, data are increasingly accurate and helping to identify where progress is strongest and where intervention may be needed to ensure pupils make up lost ground. Analysis of the performance of different groups of pupils is precise and pupils' responses to interventions are closely monitored. Regular pupil progress meetings hold teachers accountable for how well pupils in their classes are doing and ensure that leaders are clear where provision may be falling short.

The headteacher's regular monitoring of teaching, with the support of the local authority, has given an accurate picture of existing strengths and where improvements are required. A number of appropriate actions have been carefully targeted at the right areas to bring about changes. Staff speak positively of the ways such training is identifying new approaches and improving their teaching.

Much of the work so far has been driven and steered by the headteacher, whose vision for improvement has been successfully taken on throughout the school. Senior leadership has been expanded; other senior leaders and middle managers have undertaken training and are beginning to contribute more. They are taking greater developmental roles, increasing their monitoring involvement and gaining a clearer view of how well the school is doing. However, they have not yet taken full responsibility for their roles nor become sufficiently proactive in their approach to steering improvements.

New appointments to the governing body have brought experience and an increasingly rigorous approach. Governors have undertaken appropriate training in interpreting school data and have increased their involvement in the day-to-day life of the school. There is now evidence of greater challenge and governors say they feel more confident to question the school's actions.

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

- Develop self-evaluation across the school so that leaders and managers at all levels have a clear picture of the achievement of different groups of pupils and a better understanding of the impact of actions taken to bring about improvement– satisfactory

## External support

Following the previous inspection, the local authority submitted its statement of action, which was judged to meet requirements. The local authority has provided satisfactory support from a range of appropriate consultants. The headteacher has been effectively aided in establishing a secure and accurate foundation for monitoring of teaching. Other consultants have given good support to establish effective strategies to improve teaching. The main purposes of the collaborative partnership with another primary school are to provide support in developing leadership and management skills and improve teachers' understanding of how they can help pupils learn more effectively. It has been successful in widening teachers' understanding and confidence in the use of assessment.