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Mrs J Steele  
Headteacher  
Horsell CofE Aided Junior School  
Meadway Drive  
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Dear Mrs Steele

**Special measures: monitoring inspection of Horsell CofE Aided Junior School**

Following my visit with Graham Saltmarsh, additional inspector, to your school on 23 and 24 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 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 – 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 Surrey.

Yours sincerely

Anne Wellham  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in 6-7 October 2010**

- Accelerate pupils' progress in order to raise their attainment in English and mathematics by:
  - ensuring that the more-able pupils are always given work that challenges and extends them
  - analysing the reasons why girls underachieve in mathematics and implementing consistent teaching strategies that build their confidence and understanding
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write at length independently in order to improve the fluency of their writing.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good in all year groups by:
  - ensuring all teachers take responsibility for assessing pupils' progress regularly throughout the year and making sure they are on track to meet challenging targets in relation to their initial starting points
  - checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments so that there is whole-school agreement about levels of attainment and what constitutes good and satisfactory progress
  - eliminating inconsistencies between classes and year groups so that all groups of pupils are given work that challenges and extends their thinking.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance in driving improvement by:
  - evaluating all aspects of the school's work with greater rigour
  - giving senior and middle leaders more autonomy and accountability for driving improvement and monitoring pupils' progress
  - involving teachers in checking pupils' progress from term to term and taking swift action to tackle early signs of underachievement
  - ensuring that the school improvement plan includes precise actions, timescales and measurable targets for improvement so that staff and governors can evaluate the impact of actions taken.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Horsell Junior School**

### **Report from the first monitoring inspection on 23-24 March 2011**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, visited lessons in all year groups, scrutinised documents and met with the senior leadership team, heads of year, subject leaders, teachers, groups of pupils, two representatives from the governing body, a consultant employed by the local authority and the School Improvement Partner.

#### **Context**

Following the inspection, an informal partnership has been established with a successful local primary school to share good practice and provide support to the headteacher. An additional skills governor has been appointed to the school to support the governing body.

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

The school has started to tackle the underachievement and halt the decline in standards by introducing more robust systems to increase the accuracy and quality of assessment information. Teachers are developing a better understanding of how to assess pupils' attainment and track the progress of groups of pupils and individuals. They are more accountable for the progress of the pupils they teach because tracking is done on a class-by-class basis and regular meetings to discuss pupils' progress with senior leaders are more rigorous and challenging. However, the role that year leaders play in tracking progress across year groups is not developing quickly enough to eliminate the inconsistencies in progress between and within year groups. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is carefully tracked to make sure that they receive specific support in lessons and additional tuition in small groups if they fall behind.

Although the quality of assessment information has improved, the attainment of the more-able pupils is not rising consistently because they are not given work that challenges or extends them in all lessons. Pupils are often set inappropriate targets because not all teachers are secure in their knowledge of levelling and assessment. Pupils do not always know or understand how to use their targets to improve their work. This is particularly the case when targets relate to a lower level than the one at which the pupil is working.

There has been effective support from a consultant which is raising attainment in mathematics. Pupils, especially girls, report that they enjoy lessons and are increasingly confident of their abilities to develop and extend their skills. Current school information shows that pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach the school's target for mathematics. Pupils are not achieving the levels of which they are capable

in English, particularly in writing. Too many pupils are making poor progress in writing in Year 3 and do not make up lost ground by Year 6. Pupils are being given more opportunities to write at length independently, although writing tasks are not always planned to extend pupils' thinking or engage their interest.

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress in order to raise their attainment in English and mathematics - satisfactory

### **Other relevant pupil outcomes**

The school's strong Christian ethos underpins pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development. The school cares for the pupils very well and keeps them safe from harm. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is high. Behaviour around the school and in the majority of lessons is excellent.

### **The effectiveness of provision**

The school has worked hard to refine the systems for tracking pupils' progress and increasing teachers' responsibility and accountability. However, these systems are having a limited impact on improving the consistency and quality of learning. The majority of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory. Although teachers are using assessment information more consistently to plan lessons, not all of them are confident or secure enough in knowing how to pitch the lesson so that all groups of pupils are given work that matches their abilities and interests. Teachers' expectations of pupils' learning do not fully take account of what pupils are capable of achieving in relation to their starting points when they joined the school. Pupils are keen to learn and apply themselves to the tasks they are set even when they do not fully engage their interest. Where teaching is lively and well paced, pupils are fully involved and enthusiastic contributors to their learning. For example, in one Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils' learning moved on quickly because each activity provided a new level of challenge and group work was carefully guided to make them think carefully before applying their skills to solving the problem. When used well, opportunities to talk with partners allow pupils to take a more active part in their learning. This is particularly improving girls' confidence in discussing their learning. Teachers are marking pupils' work regularly and providing detailed information on how to improve their work against their targets. However, this is only effective when pupils' targets accurately reflect the level at which they are working. Much more remains to be done to ensure that all pupils benefit from good quality of teaching.

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

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good in all year groups- inadequate

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

Although senior leaders acknowledge that the school has to improve and they have a more accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, they require considerable support to develop their strategic skills and to present clear messages. They are monitoring aspects of the school's work with greater rigour, particularly in tracking pupils' progress. They have increased their monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, and are now making more frequent 'drop-ins' to lessons. However, judgements about satisfactory teaching are not based on clear evaluation criteria so there is not a shared view across the school of what the difference is between satisfactory and good teaching.

Positive links have been established with a local primary school so that effective practice in leadership and management can be modelled and shared. Governors have responded positively to support and training, and have a greater understanding of their role. There is a greater emphasis on scrutinising school data and challenging subject leaders to account for achievement. The roles and responsibilities of middle leaders have been defined and they are playing a greater part in monitoring performance. They have a keener appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school but their roles are developing slowly because they have had limited opportunities for coaching or to observe good practice.

The school improvement plan contains precise actions, timescales and targets for improvement, and is closely aligned with the detailed and appropriate local authority action plan for the school. Further work is needed to make sure that the impact of actions taken to improve the school's performance is fully evaluated.

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

- Increase the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance in driving improvement -satisfactory

## **External support**

The local authority has recognised that improvement has been slower than anticipated in some areas and is now providing additional support for leadership and management. A consultant has been appointed to support the senior leadership team and to further develop the informal partnership with an effective local school. A mathematics consultant is providing good support to develop assessment in mathematics, and the work of the School Improvement Partner has had a positive impact on improving the use of assessment information across the school. The local authority action plan meets all requirements.