

Tribal Education  
1–4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524 **Direct T** 0845 123 6001  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 0845 123 6002  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) **Direct email:** matthew.parker@tribalgroup.com

30 June 2011

Mrs V Cobb, Executive headteacher and  
Mrs J Ireland, Acting headteacher  
Chiddingly Primary School  
Muddles Green  
Chiddingly  
Lewes  
East Sussex  
BN8 6HN

Dear Mrs Cobb and Mrs Ireland

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

Following my visit to your school on 28 and 29 June 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 second 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 – good.  
Progress since the last monitoring inspection – good.

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 East Sussex.

Yours sincerely

Mike Burghart  
**Additional Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Raise achievement by:
  - improving attainment and accelerating pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics
  - improving pupils' attendance for those pupils who do not attend as regularly as they should.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - eliminating inadequate teaching as a matter of urgency and ensuring the majority of lessons are good by improving the use of assessment to inform planning
  - providing a curriculum which clearly sets out the steps for teaching the basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics in mixed-age classes
  - ensuring all work is carefully matched to all pupils' capabilities and builds on their existing skills.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders at all levels by:
  - developing more robust procedures and processes for self-evaluation and taking swift action to address underachievement
  - setting demanding targets and ensuring school improvement planning focuses on raising achievement
  - ensuring that senior and subject leaders have the skills, support and opportunities to improve the quality of teaching and learning
  - ensuring that governors robustly challenge and hold the school to account.

### **Priority for further improvement identified during the first monitoring inspection**

- Improve the quality of learning opportunities for children in Reception by
  - ensuring activities are rooted in good Early Years Foundation Stage practice
  - providing more opportunities to challenge children to be active independent learners.

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

### **Report from the second monitoring inspection on 28 and 29 June 2011**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, the acting headteacher, members of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and representatives from the local authority.

#### **Context**

There have been notable changes since the last monitoring inspection. The Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 teacher is on extended leave and has been replaced by a long-term supply teacher. Improvements to security to ensure pupils and staff are safe have been made to all doors. A dedicated library space has been created with improved resources, and improvements to outdoor facilities are ongoing, for example for Reception and in markings for the playground.

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

School records confirm what was evident during the inspection that rates of progress continue to increase. This is particularly clear with regard to pupils' writing in Class 2, where over half the pupils are on line to be above average at the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievement is much improved, reflecting good progress against the area for development identified in the special measures report of 2010. Progress in overcoming the deficiencies in pupils' performance in Key Stage 2 is being successfully accelerated with pupils making above-average gains in both English and mathematics.

Typical examples of good learning were seen in a variety of lessons. In a Years 1 and 2 lesson, pupils' understanding of value was enhanced by linking basic multiplication skills to problems with money to work out which coins you would need to pay for toys. A Years 5 and 6 music session showed how well pupils enjoy working together to compose and record their own music. Their sound-scapes were an excellent match for their seascape paintings, and demonstrated pupils' developing knowledge and understanding of artistic styles and techniques. In all lessons observed the use of talking partners significantly contributed to pupils' learning through effective self-evaluation and constructive criticism. The enthusiasm and positive attitudes common to the last monitoring inspection have been successfully built upon, with the large majority of pupils keen to learn. More-able pupils in particular enjoy being challenged more effectively with opportunities to take the initiative, for example in research. Those who find learning difficult are fully included in all lessons and their achievement is being improved as a result of good support. The developing use of class, group and personal targets to show pupils what to

aspire to and how to improve their work is a positive feature underpinning the quality of learning.

Reception children are being better stimulated as a result of a wider choice of activities in and outdoors, but their progress is limited by their lack of previous experience and they too often look to adults to tell them what to do. The school is aware of this and plans to make learning more securely based on good Early Years Foundation Stage practice already in place. There are early indications of success, but progress in addressing previous weaknesses is satisfactory rather than good. This is because initiatives have not had time to have full effect and the, as yet unresolved, staffing situation.

Improvements to the attendance profile continue, but the unauthorised absence of a small group of pupils keeps rates well below the national average. The school is working to overcome this with some success. However, the attendance of 18 pupils is well below average. Even taking out legitimate medical reasons and despite the schools' keen efforts to persuade parents and carers to follow school and local authority policy, the absence of a minority of pupils falls well short of what is acceptable.

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

- Raise achievement by accelerating pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics – good.

### **Other relevant pupil outcomes**

Pupils continue to feel safe and behave well. The way they responded to the high levels of care and guidance shown by staff during the violent storm at the time of the inspection, when the school was struck by lightning, was a credit to pupils' personal development. Although it was a very frightening experience, pupils conducted themselves extremely well showing consideration for others and following instructions carefully. Pupils are clearly aware of the need for rules, having contributed to their construction, and show good progress in personal development. Previous strengths derived from personal, social and health education are being sustained.

### **The effectiveness of provision**

All teaching observed was at least satisfactory, with the majority being good. The school's own monitoring records show lessons range from satisfactory to good. They also indicate the progress that staff have made as a result of feedback and professional development. Changes to the teaching staff and better planning are having positive effects on the quality of provision and the progress pupils are making. This is most notable in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children are being given more opportunity to learn through play and first-hand experience.

Further developments to the way pupils' performance is measured and recorded mean senior leaders have a much clearer picture of the success of initiatives and are able to pinpoint what still needs to be done. The introduction of a computer-based system to help analyse pupils' progress and set targets to support future learning is having a positive impact. This is especially effective in terms of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Coupled with a change in the way the inclusion manager is working, this is helping pupils to achieve more effectively. The move away from the specialist teacher focusing on only a few pupils to a more effective monitoring role, evaluating the impact of provision and offering advice to colleagues, is proving successful.

Planning the curriculum around pupils' needs and interests is continuing the improvement identified in the last inspection. Pupils' response in lessons and the quality of the work in their books and on display show the effect of growing enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning. This is particularly the case in terms of investigating and experimental opportunities. Years 1 and 2 are well on the way to finding out how many grass seeds it takes to grow a football pitch and Years 3 and 4 show a good understanding of the way pictograms can make comparisons clearer.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning – good.

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

Improvements in leadership and management since the school went into special measures have been outstanding. Good progress has been made in sustaining this since the last monitoring inspection. The key to this is in the partnership between the acting headteacher and the executive headteacher. Their evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is robust and accurately identifies priorities for development over and above those directed by Ofsted inspections. As senior leaders they set aspirational targets for the school and for individual pupils. Records show the impact of this in rising attainment and developing progress. Strategic management is good, but the long-term effectiveness is limited by the uncertainties about staffing which have yet to be finally resolved.

There is a growing contribution from other staff as middle managers which includes reviews of pupils' work and moderation of attainment levels. That this stops short of observing colleagues teaching restricts managers' ability to analyse what is, and what is not, effective, but there are plans to extend their roles with regard to this.

There are no immediate plans to return full powers to the governing body, but governors have been involved in agreeing the forward budget alongside the management interim body. This has been successfully completed in spite of the falling roll and is a credit to governors', especially the Chair's, developing skills and

understanding derived from training by the local authority. Progress in terms of governors' ability to participate in strategic management, and to challenge the school, holding it to account in the light of pupils' achievement, is satisfactory.

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers – good.

### **External support**

The school continues to be well supported by the local authority. Financial and personnel advice and guidance are helping the school to rationalise staffing, and the involvement of consultants enhances training. The outcome of these initiatives is evident in provision better targeted at pupils' needs and increased progress rates. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that the current high level of support is maintained, particularly in relation to strategic management and during the period of staff uncertainty.