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28 November 2011

Mrs C Bell  
Headteacher  
Riverview Primary School  
Suffolk Road  
Burton-on-Trent  
DE15 9HR

Dear Mrs Bell

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

Following my visit to your school on 23 and 24 November 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 February 2011. 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.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – 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 Staffordshire and the inspection team.

Yours sincerely

Brian Cartwright  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2011**

- Improve the progress made by pupils and raise attainment to at least the national average by July 2012 by ensuring that teachers consistently:
  - have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - set work that is appropriately matched to pupils' abilities
  - move learning on at a brisk pace.
  
- Improve pupils' enjoyment of, and behaviour in, lessons by:
  - providing a curriculum that is more closely matched to their interests
  - setting tasks in stimulating and engaging contexts
  - providing pupils with greater opportunities to use and apply their basic skills in a range of subjects.
  
- Increase the rate at which the school improves by ensuring that leaders and managers, including the governing body, take swift and decisive action to deal with weaknesses as soon as they are identified through accurate and robust monitoring of teaching and learning.
  
- Improve attendance to at least 94% by July 2011 by raising the criterion for intervention to 90%.

**Special measures: monitoring of Riverview Primary School****Report from the second monitoring inspection on 23 November 2011****Evidence**

During the visit I saw 11 lessons, met with groups of staff, pupils, parents and carers, governors and representatives of the local authority (LA). I scrutinized pupils' work, records of monitoring and evaluation, and governing body minutes.

**Context**

There have been no major changes to the school's circumstances or staffing complement since the previous visit. There have been changes to the assignment of LA staff that monitor the impact of the LA's action plan.

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

The attainment of pupils in Year 2 in 2011, and from national tests in Year 6 in 2011 were below average, confirming the school's predictions. Measures of progress for that Year 6 group were also well below average. Classroom standards remain low in general overall but there are some signs of recovery in Years 5 and 6. Good half-termly assessments of all pupils is helping to guide intervention and support, and also shows some closing of the gaps between currently low attainment and the nationally expected standards. But these note continuing concerns in the progress of pupils in some Year 2 and Year 3/4 classes. Pupils now in Year 6 are continuing to benefit from their good teaching in Year 5, and are enjoying learning. They particularly like the larger research projects that they have recently completed, which combine reading for pleasure with writing for purpose. In other classes, the vast majority of pupils focus on their learning very well once they can get started on their activities. In one excellent example in a science lesson, a Year 1 pupil could not wait to tell the rest of the class that 'they won't believe what we've done'.

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

- Improve the progress made by pupils and raise attainment to at least the national average by July 2012 – satisfactory

**Other relevant pupil outcomes**

In all the lessons I observed, pupils typically behaved well, with only occasional slips in their engagement with learning caused by over-long teacher discussion. Around the school they are normally polite and considerate to one another, and close supervision ensures they have limited scope for major misbehaviour. Pupils, and all of the parents and carers I met, confirm that pupils enjoy school, feel safe, and that concerns relating to behaviour are dealt with effectively. Most parents and carers are pleased with provision, and all can recognise improvements. Attendance continues to

improve thanks to consistent efforts by the school in collaboration with pupils to encourage and reward good attendance, and is now slightly above the national average for primary schools.

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

- Improve pupils' enjoyment of, and behaviour in, lessons – good
- Improve attendance – good

### **The effectiveness of provision**

At this visit all the lessons I saw were satisfactory or better, with the outstanding examples illustrating how effective differentiation, and minute-by-minute adjustment and support by the teacher, works to enthuse and motivate every pupil. Planning is much better, allowing pupils to work from the outset on challenging activities. Marking is also good, with most work receiving praise and suggestions for improvement although as yet pupils are not consistently responding to that advice. However, there remains a small proportion of teaching that does not differentiate the task to an appropriately personal level, has some teachers taking too long to introduce the lesson, or sees them interrupt otherwise good learning to make a point that would be better for pupils eventually to discover for themselves. I did not observe classes taught by teachers undergoing formal programmes for improving their teaching.

Pupils are enjoying topic work, and there are some excellent examples of pupil research into areas that interest them. Some pupils said they had hoped for 'more fun' mathematics and English lessons, but overall the curriculum has improved well.

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

- providing a curriculum that is more closely matched to their interests – satisfactory
- setting tasks in stimulating and engaging contexts – satisfactory
- Providing pupils with greater opportunities to use and apply their basic skills in a range of subjects – satisfactory.

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

The school continues formally to address underperformance, and has been successful in bringing about improvements in most of the teaching. The evaluations of strengths and weaknesses are accurate, resulting in suitably clear development plans that also recognise the substantial improvements in pupil attainment that are still needed. Very good monitoring of teaching is being carried out by senior staff, with good support and training from the LA. There are good examples of individual

subject support from LA consultants, and opportunities for teachers to team teach, observe good practice, and share ideas. There remains a slight sense of anxiety despite the consistent evidence of general improvement; staff should be assured that they are able to bring about the necessary improvements in pupil achievement. Members of the governing body are spending time in school themselves, and have listened to pupils and parents and carers as they try to survey users' views; this is important as a means of gathering evidence to corroborate their evaluations. They are also about to receive training on the interpretation of school performance data.

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

- Increase the rate at which the school improves by ensuring that leaders and managers, including the governing body, take swift and decisive action to deal with weaknesses as soon as they are identified through accurate and robust monitoring of teaching and learning – satisfactory

### **External support**

LA day-to-day classroom support is helpful. The LA, governors and school leaders are working together to secure the quality of teaching. As a result some staffing changes are taking place to ensure that the quality of provision will accelerate improvements in pupil's learning, to meet the objectives and timescales in the LA statement of Action.