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19 January 2012

Mrs K Docking  
Headteacher  
Clifford Bridge Primary School  
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Coventry  
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Dear Mrs Docking

**Special measures: monitoring inspection of Clifford Bridge Primary School**

Following my visit, with Sally Hall, additional inspector, to your school on 17–18 January 2012, 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 on 13 July 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.

One newly qualified teacher may 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 Coventry.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Sheldrick  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Improve leadership and management by:
  - making sure that monitoring and evaluation of all safeguarding procedures are kept up to date and carried out meticulously
  - providing ambition for success, embedding it and securing a drive for improvement which is shared by all staff
  - ensuring monitoring and evaluation of provision are effective and result in improvement in pupil's progress and particularly in their attainment in writing in Key Stage 1
  - improving school cohesion by raising the morale of staff and pupils and involving parents and carers more in their children's education
  - making links with other communities which will enable pupils to gain first-hand experience of the wider cultural mix in the United Kingdom and further afield.
  
- Raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - ensuring that teachers receive high quality professional development training and support, especially in Key Stage 1
  - improving the use of marking and assessment to plan work which challenges all pupils, including the more able and those with special educational needs and/ or disabilities
  - improving opportunities for pupils to become involved in their own learning and aware of the goals they need to set to achieve challenging targets
  - ensuring that teachers receive effective training on the use of their interactive whiteboards and other aspects of information and communication technology as needed.
  
- Improve the curriculum by:
  - ensuring it meets the national requirements for all subjects
  - providing opportunities for pupils to develop literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills through the wider curriculum.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Clifford Bridge Primary School**

### **Report from the first monitoring inspection on 17–18 January 2011**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body, representatives of the local authority and groups of parents and carers.

#### **Context**

Since the school was placed in special measures, the headteacher left the school at the end of the summer term. From the end of July the school has been in a partnership with, Walsgrave CofE primary school, that was judged outstanding at its last Ofsted inspection. As part of this partnership an executive headteacher and her deputy have been in post. The governing body are committed to formalising the current leadership arrangements and are consulting on formation a Hard Federation from April 2012.

#### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

The achievement of pupils continues to be inadequate because pupils are not making sufficient progress in lessons. The 2011 test results confirm that, although attainment in both English and mathematics pupils is average, children make inadequate progress from the time they enter the nursery. However, pupils are beginning to make better progress because teachers are more focussed on the outcomes for their pupils.

The improvements in English are more apparent because this has been a particularly high priority since September. Pupils' reading and their spellings have improved because of new programmes the school has adopted. These initiatives have been particularly beneficial to those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is evidence of improved writing, particularly in Year 2. This is largely because of the enhancement made to the curriculum and because teachers have improved their assessment of this aspect of pupils' work. Improvement in mathematics is not quite as strong, largely because pupils have insufficient opportunity to use and apply their mathematical thinking. The school has implemented a new approach to the monitoring of pupils' attainment and their progress, which also allows the school to show how it is closing the gaps in the performance of different groups. There are promising signs that pupils learning English as an additional language are making enhanced progress as a result of the appointment of a member of staff with a focus on ensuring the needs of these pupils are more effectively met. Despite these improvements, pupils, particularly the more able, are not making enough progress in lessons. Teachers do not have sufficiently

high expectation of what pupils can achieve, both in terms of the volume of work produced and in terms of the levels attained by the end of a lesson.

### **The quality of teaching**

Teaching is improving, although there continue to be occasions when lessons are less than satisfactory. All lessons have clear objectives and, increasingly, 'stepping stones' are being used so pupils understand how they can achieve the desired outcome. Work is often planned for different ability groups, particularly in English and mathematics. In the more effective lessons, this work is well matched to the needs of all ability groups and there is flexibility so that pupils can choose work that is more challenging. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have been much more accurately identified and steps are being taken to ensure these needs are met.

Teachers are adopting more effective strategies to ensure all pupils have to think about the questions they are asked. For instance, pupils are expected to talk their ideas through with a partner when a challenging question is posed. The teaching of reading and spelling have noticeably improved because a much more systematic approach has been adopted that makes effective use of teaching assistants. The use of teaching assistants elsewhere is not as effective, largely because the introductions to lessons are overly long. This limits the opportunity for teaching assistants to provide support to pupils. Pupils were observed to be making the greatest progress when they experienced short introductions but had regular opportunities to consider how they could attain at a high level though reflecting on the attainments of their peers. Teachers are using information and communication technology (ICT) more effectively to increase the range of experiences that pupils have. A promising development is the technology that allows pupils to easily show their work to the whole class. Generally pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to use and apply their mathematical thinking. An exception to this was a mathematics lesson where older pupils were challenged to use a range of mathematical skills to identify the best laptop deal.

Despite the improvements to planning, weaknesses still remain that limit the progress pupils make, particularly for the more able. Pupils do not experience enough lessons in which they are effectively challenged. Teachers are not ensuring that pupils of different abilities are clear about precisely what they must achieve to demonstrate that they have made good progress. The introduction of a target-setting book, and regular discussions about this, have had a limited impact because teachers are not referring sufficiently to the levels of challenge in the lessons they teach. The marking in pupils' books has improved. Pupils are regularly praised for their efforts and improvements are identified. However, marking does not have enough impact because it does not give enough guidance on what pupils need to do to reach the next level.

Effective practice was observed in a Year 4 English lesson linked to playwriting. All pupils worked on an objective related to punctuation but they used assessment criteria to independently challenge themselves to work at a higher level. The progress made by older pupils is limited because teachers are not ensuring these pupils are sufficiently aware of the assessment criteria at a range of levels. Pupils progress particularly well where they are challenged to compete against each other, or in order to complete a task in record time. Unfortunately, such experiences appear to be infrequent. As a result, the amount of work pupils produce is reduced.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching and learning – satisfactory.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning even where there are weaknesses in teaching. Pupils indicate that they feel safer as a result of the improvements the school has made to the boundary fence and because they are listened to more. Pupils were in no doubt that their school is getting better. The school has successfully improved the attendance of pupils who have been persistently absent.

### **The quality of leadership and management of the school**

Leaders have an accurate view about the current position of the school. They recognise the many weaknesses yet to be addressed but have skilfully prioritised the actions needed to address these. The judgements senior leaders make about the quality of lessons are accurate. The new more systematic approach to the teaching of reading and spelling has been effectively implemented. The school has dealt effectively with the safeguarding issues identified at the last inspection. The school now adopts a meticulous approach to all aspects related to keeping pupils safe. The parents who spoke to inspectors were very positive about the changes made to the school. They mentioned the improvements made to the learning environment and the ease with which they could communicate with the school's senior leaders. Leaders show a commendable willingness to think longer term. They have recognised the importance of ensuring the school has a stable senior leadership team and are currently consulting with parents on a federation.

Leaders have developed highly effective partnerships with the local authority and Walsgrave CofE primary school. This has allowed the school to quickly make changes to the curriculum by adopting this school's plans. Pupils now experience more learning associated with the full range of subjects. Pupils enthused about the

increased number of science investigations they undertake but some yearn for more opportunities to undertake art and music. Whilst the curriculum is reinforcing pupils' English skills more effectively, there has not been as much progress in terms of mathematics or ICT.

The morale of the majority of staff is much higher because they are experiencing the benefits of the improvements already made and feel they have greater influence. The administrative staff have provided very good support to senior leaders in establishing more effective systems in a number of important areas, including attendance and the monitoring of achievement. Although staff have experienced relevant training, more personalised programmes of support are being developed in recognition that the pace of improvement in teaching needs to be accelerated.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- improve leadership and management – good
- improve the quality of the curriculum – satisfactory.

### **External support**

The quality and impact of the support provided by those external to the school has been good. The amended statement of action is fit for purpose. The local authority acted quickly and effectively to secure high quality senior leadership for the school. The school benefitted greatly from a rigorous external review that identified the strengths and weakness in teaching in September. Since that time, the support provided by the local authority related to ICT has been particularly effective. The support related to improving teaching and the Early Years Foundation Stage has increased the confidence of middle leaders. The local authority provided important support in improving the accuracy of the identification of pupils' special educational needs. Staff and members of the governing body enthused about the additional insight gained through their links with their partner school.