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**Serco**

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Mr J Gallimore  
Executive Headteacher  
Hardwick Primary School  
Dover Street  
Derby  
DE23 6QP

Dear Mr Gallimore

**Special measures: monitoring inspection of Hardwick Primary School**

Following my visit with Barry Wood, Additional Inspector, to your school on 26–27 June 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 second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in November 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 – inadequate.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory.

One newly qualified teacher may be appointed to teach in the Early Years Foundation Stage or Years 5 and 6.

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 Derby.

Yours sincerely

Tim Bristow  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Meet all requirements for ensuring children's safety with immediate effect by:
  - ensuring all necessary checks on staff are recorded appropriately
  - ensuring the governing body monitors procedures and practice more closely
  - ensuring that all staff understand the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - securing stability in the leadership of the school and ensuring that all staff engage fully with the school's drive for further improvement
  - developing the analytical skills of all leaders and teachers, so that they are able confidently to interpret data about the performance of different groups of pupils
  - developing rigorous self-evaluation and effective improvement planning at all levels
  - ensuring that whole-school strategies are implemented fully by all and evaluated carefully, as part of a structured programme, to check for their effectiveness.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school, so that 100% is at least satisfactory and 60% is at least good by July 2012, by:
  - ensuring that teachers make effective and accurate use of assessment information to match activities to pupils' abilities when planning lessons
  - ensuring that teachers identify, within lessons, when pupils are ready for the next steps in their learning
  - quickening the pace of lessons and ensuring that teachers do not talk for too long
  - developing greater consistency in the quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils.
- Raise levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics and accelerate pupils' learning and progress across the school, by:
  - improving the curriculum to meet better the needs of all pupils by ensuring individual topics identify a clear structure of skills and knowledge
  - improving pupils' language skills by providing more opportunities for pupils to talk to each other and participate actively in their learning
  - ensuring that pupils fully understand what they are expected to learn in lessons and are able to evaluate the progress they are making
  - raising pupils' attendance to at least 94% by July 2012.

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

### **Report from the second monitoring inspection on 26–27 June 2012**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, the associate headteacher, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board, representatives from the local authority, and teachers.

#### **Context**

Since the previous monitoring inspection, one senior leader has retired. A teacher with responsibility for English has been appointed and she is due to take up her post in September 2012. A total of seven staff will be leaving this term and there will be five new appointments starting in September 2012. At the time of this visit, procedures to recruit a substantive headteacher were starting.

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

Since the previous monitoring inspection, progress in all years and for most groups has accelerated. In Year 6 and the Early Years Foundation Stage, progress is now faster than would be expected nationally and the gap between low attainment in these cohorts and expected attainment is narrowing. Progress in reading is faster than in writing and mathematics. However, assessment information shows that attainment is not rising strongly enough across the rest of the school. In Years 1 to 5, the acceleration in progress is not sustained enough to narrow the attainment gap at the necessary rate because there is insufficient teaching that is good. For example, because the majority of teaching in Years 3 and 4 remains only satisfactory, the gap has not narrowed appreciably.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are now making better progress than at the time of the last visit. The same can be said for pupils who speak English as an additional language and who are recently arrived in this country. This is a result of changes to the curriculum and the arrangements for teaching that are now better tailored to provide extra support to these groups of pupils.

In the majority of lessons where teaching is not yet good, pupils are better engaged with their work and try hard to do their best, but work is not pitched at the right level to enable them to make rapid progress. This is because teachers still do not use assessment information well enough when planning activities for different groups of pupils. This results in pupils finding their work either too hard or too easy.

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

- raise levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics and accelerate pupils' learning and progress across the school – satisfactory.

### **The quality of teaching**

Senior leaders have been effective in considerably reducing the amount of inadequate teaching, but a very small minority still remains. The acceleration in pupils' progress across the school can be attributed to a general improvement in lessons. Teachers work hard to implement the senior leadership team's expectations of what teaching strategies should be included in all lessons. One success is that lessons are more productive because teachers talk for less time, giving pupils more time to complete their work. However, teaching strategies such as talking partners (where pupils talk in pairs to discuss their learning and articulate answers to questions), the use of lesson objectives and success criteria do not have the impact they could. Some teachers demonstrate that they do not fully understand the purpose of these strategies to improve learning. One consequence of this is that the proportion of teaching that is good remains similar to that found at the time of the last monitoring visit.

Too often in lessons where teaching is only satisfactory or weaker, teachers plan what they think the school requires of them without giving sufficient attention to pupils' prior learning, needs and abilities. For example, pupils in two classes of different ability had the same mathematics lesson. The plans for each lesson showed a different degree of challenge depending on ability but, as all were working on exactly the same task, this had no impact. While this met the needs of the more-able pupils, others found the task too hard. In lessons where teaching is good, teachers plan thoughtfully, balancing the expectations of the school against the specific needs of the pupils. These lessons are challenging and engaging. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were systematically working through the steps necessary to solve algebra problems. Good quality teaching, questioning and demonstration ensured that all groups of pupils worked independently to solve the problems successfully at their own level of ability.

Teachers' marking in English has improved considerably. In Year 6, it is outstanding because the pupils benefit from marking that gives them excellent and systematic advice on the next steps they need to take. Teachers then give pupils sufficient time to respond to this marking and to consolidate the learning in lessons. In other years, teachers consistently give a balance of praise and advice on how to improve the work, but they do not give pupils sufficient time to respond to this. Consequently, this marking has less impact than it could.

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

- improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school – satisfactory.

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

Pupils continue to work hard and to try their best in most lessons and around the school. They are polite, friendly and considerate to each other. There is, occasionally, misbehaviour in lessons where teaching is weak. This occurs when activities do not meet pupils' needs and they become bored and restless. Incidents of exclusions and bullying have reduced considerably over the last year. One major success is that attendance that was low at the time of the inspection in 2011 is now above average. The school demonstrates a strong and effective determination to ensure that pupils attend school regularly that parents and carers now appreciate.

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

The executive headteacher has demonstrated that he can drive improvement in a relatively short time. For example, he has considerably reduced the proportion of inadequate teaching, attendance is above average, pupils' progress has accelerated, and safeguarding procedures are now good. A stable leadership team now has a better understanding of their roles and what is expected of them. Performance management procedures, such as individual staff action plans and checks on the overall quality of teaching, have been established. However, improvements to teaching and learning are fragile. This is because some leaders have yet to demonstrate that they can fulfil the requirement to drive improvements to teaching with the necessary urgency. At the time of this monitoring inspection, there is limited evidence that staff action plans, that are the responsibility of phase leaders, are having much impact on the quality of teaching. Some of the action plans lack precision. This means that it is not clear what steps teachers should take to improve aspects of their teaching or how any improvement will be assessed.

The executive and associate headteachers have established a range of useful procedures to support the work of the school. For example, procedures to track and assess pupils are now much more helpful. Staff report that they find them easy to understand and they can now be held to account for the progress of pupils in their classes. The school and local authority development plans are useful tools for checking progress and accurately evaluate when success criteria have been met. The interim executive board is now established and is having an increasing impact on school leaders through their monitoring and evaluation procedures and meetings. It demonstrates that it is reinforcing the urgency for a faster rate of school improvement.

The curriculum for English is improving for all groups of pupils and they report how much they enjoy their lessons because they are linked to other subjects that add interest. One reason why attainment remains low in mathematics is because the

curriculum does not give pupils sufficient opportunity to practise and apply their skills in a range of contexts before learning more formal calculation methods. These are taught too early and, by Year 6, some pupils have gaps in their understanding which undermine their ability to work independently when solving problems. The school is still having to embed improvement to the teaching and learning of English and mathematics and has not yet been able to start to address the need to improve the curriculum in other subjects.

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

- improve leadership and management – satisfactory
- meet all requirements for ensuring children's safety with immediate effect – good.

### **External support**

The support of the local authority is more effective than at the time of the last monitoring inspection. This support underpins the satisfactory improvement since the last visit. Interventions, such as the moderation meetings where the schools' assessment of pupils is analysed, have been particularly useful in advising staff on where improvements to these important procedures need to be made. In addition, support for school leaders has helped to make it quite clear to them the steps they should be taking to improve teaching and learning.