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29 June 2012

Mrs J Bullous  
Executive Headteacher  
Tower View Primary School  
Vancouver Drive  
Winshill  
Burton-on-Trent  
DE15 0EZ

Dear Mrs Bullous

**Special measures: monitoring inspection of Tower View Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 27–28 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 on 7 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 – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

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.

Yours sincerely

David Anstead  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and ensure that all groups make at least satisfactory progress by:
  - analysing the progress made by different groups and ensuring teachers use the results to match tasks accurately to pupils' abilities and interests
  - providing additional support for groups where necessary, especially those known to be eligible for free school meals
  - drawing up curriculum plans for all subjects and year groups so that teachers are able to plan work that builds progressively on previous learning
  - providing teachers and teaching assistants with training appropriate to their needs.
  
- Improve the school's leadership and management by:
  - establishing a stable senior leadership team with the skills necessary to drive the school forward
  - implementing rigorous and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation procedures
  - using the results of such procedures to identify key areas for improvement and implementing suitable plans to address them
  - taking steps to raise staff morale and improve the confidence of parents and carers in the school
  - securing a governing body equipped with the skills necessary to fulfil its responsibilities and meet all statutory requirements with respect to the curriculum, information for parents and carers, and equality of opportunity.

### **An additional area for improvement was identified during the monitoring visit which took place in March 2012**

- Improve pupils' behavior and attitudes to learning.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Tower View Primary School**

### **Report from the second monitoring inspection on 27–28 June 2012**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, checked teachers' planning and pupils' work, analysed performance data and met with the executive headteacher and staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.

#### **Context**

Since the last visit, a deputy headteacher has been appointed and three teachers have left the school.

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

Teachers now regularly assess pupils and plot the progress they are making against national benchmarks. Tracking shows that pupils in all classes have made better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics since the last visit. Year 6 pupils, for example, were about a year behind where they should have been at the time of the last visit. They are now only about one term behind in reading and writing and about two terms behind in mathematics. Some of the 2012 test results were received in school during the inspection and confirm that attainment in mathematics has risen this year compared to last year. Clearly, pupils are now making better progress than they were, which is enabling them to make up the ground they had previously lost.

The attainment of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is now in line with similar pupils nationally in reading and writing but lags behind still in mathematics. This group represents about one third of all pupils at the school. The gap between this group of pupils and the attainment of all pupils nationally is closing rapidly in reading and writing but less so in mathematics.

#### **The quality of teaching**

At the last visit, half of the lessons observed were inadequate. The quality of teaching is now much improved. On this visit, most lessons seen were good or better and there was no inadequate teaching. An independent audit of provision conducted recently by the local authority concurs. Lessons are well planned and tasks of varying challenge are now provided which meet the wide variety of needs in some classes and particularly those of the mixed-age classes. There are plentiful opportunities for pupils to engage in active tasks or to work in small groups or independently, all of which they did well. Pupils enjoyed estimating and measuring a

variety of objects such as the circumference of their heads or the length of a school corridor. They were captivated by an imaginative role play in which they sat around an improvised 'camp fire' in a darkened classroom to share stories of Robin Hood's exploits. The activity helped pupils to learn about the use of exaggeration in story telling and so enthused them that they did not want to stop at breaktime.

Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and provide written praise in gold ink and detailed guidance in green ink about how pupils might improve their work. Pupils often respond to the guidance in the space below by, for example, showing they have learnt the correct spellings of words previously misspelt.

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

- improve the quality of teaching and ensure that all groups make at least satisfactory progress – good.

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

Training for all staff and lunchtime supervisors has ensured there is clarity about how behaviour should be managed. This has helped staff to implement the behaviour policy consistently. Two new teaching assistants have been appointed specifically to support individuals with challenging behaviour and special sessions provided to help individual pupils to understand and respect other pupils' rights during playtimes and in lessons. During the inspection, pupils were polite and friendly and seen to be behaving well. For example, a class rehearsing the 'seven times table' together remained resolutely focused on the exercise and associated mental arithmetic problems despite the potential distraction of a loud thunderstorm overhead. Behaviour records show that the use of sanctions is markedly down. Since the last visit, the use of exclusion has been rare, the isolation room has not been used at all and the number of detentions given has reduced dramatically. Previously, detentions were running at a rate of 51 per month but, in the last month, this fell to just two. Improved behaviour is enabling the school to put on more ambitious events for pupils which previously it says it would have shied away from doing because of the risk of disruption spoiling the activity. For example, recently, classes were allocated to a different Olympic-competing nation and attended school dressed in that nation's colours. Banners were made and the whole school participated in an 'Olympic parade' through the local community. Parents and carers commented on how well their children behaved during this event.

Attendance was low but has improved to below average since the last visit due to the more rigorous procedures introduced. However, there are still marked differences in the attendance of different groups of pupils. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, for example, still have low attendance mainly because of the serious, persistent absenteeism of a few individuals. Concerted action by the

school and local authority officers is reducing persistent absenteeism, however, and it is a fifth lower now in comparison to this time last year.

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

- improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning – good.

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

A new headteacher has been appointed to start in September 2012. He will be joined by two new senior leaders, one with responsibility for Key Stage 2 and the other for the Reception and Year 1 classes, plus two new and experienced class teachers. Along with the recent appointment of a deputy headteacher, the school will receive significant additional leadership next year to supplement the work of existing leaders. The executive headteacher will continue to advise the school next year for two days a week, gradually withdrawing her support as the school finds its own feet again and her input is no longer essential.

Monitoring of provision is regular and rigorous. The governing body now has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the progress it is making towards coming out of special measures. It seeks and knows the views of the local community through a parents' forum and has begun to hold the school to account. Teachers are regularly observed teaching and are challenged about the performance of every child in their class at a termly two-hour long meeting with a senior leader. At this meeting, the class tracking data is analysed and the progress made by every child evaluated to check whether it is sufficient and whether additional support may be required. This approach also enables the leadership team to evaluate the impact of intervention strategies resourced from the pupil premium funding stream.

Teachers have received intensive training in how to teach literacy well and, more recently, in good practice in mathematics. In addition, clear systems and processes have been established, and these are welcomed by staff. For instance, a new marking and assessment policy has been introduced based on the approach taken at one of the executive headteacher's partner schools. Staff from the partner school trained and coached teachers at this school in implementing the policy. Some teachers from this school have worked alongside outstanding practitioners in the partner schools to raise their awareness of what children with the same starting points can achieve when they are taught well for a sustained period of time. Consequently, the quality of teaching is improving, pupils' attitudes to learning are better and achievement is beginning to rise. The school recognises that it still has further to go but it has a new found self-confidence and the determination to continue to improve. The school's reputation in the community is growing, which is shown in the increasing demand from parents and carers for a place in the school for their children.

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

- improve the school's leadership and management – good.

### **External support**

The range of external support provided by the local authority is having a good impact on improving the school. The local authority provides additional funding for the secondment of the executive headteacher, the appointment of the deputy headteacher and the two teaching assistants specialising in managing behaviour. It has provided consultants to deliver training. The local authority's participation in monitoring the work of the school has supplied external rigour to the school's self-evaluation of the quality of its provision.