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Mr Ian Bateman  
John of Rolleston Primary School  
Chapel Lane  
Rolleston-on-Dove  
Burton-on-Trent  
DE13 9AG

Dear Mr Bateman

**Special measures: monitoring inspection of John of Rolleston Primary School**

Following my visit with Rodney Braithwaite, Additional Inspector, to your school on 12–13 July 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 5 March 2012. 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.

Newly qualified teachers may be 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 Corporate Director of Children's Services for Staffordshire.

Yours sincerely

David Rzeznik  
**Additional Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2012**

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:
  - identifying pupils who are currently underachieving
  - monitoring their progress in lessons and through their written work more frequently
  - ensuring that assessments used to monitor pupils' progress reflect accurately the rates of progress shown in their written work and in lessons
  - giving more opportunities to groups of pupils who underachieve to extend their basic skills in literacy and numeracy across different subjects.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching so that no lesson is less than good and the good teaching is further improved to become outstanding by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of middle and potentially higher-attaining groups of pupils
  - giving precise feedback on pupils' progress during lessons and in their written work by clearly indicating how they should improve further
  - monitoring pupils' response to teachers' marking in their subsequent work.
  
- Bring rigour to the school's monitoring and evaluation to strengthen its capacity to improve by:
  - focusing on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress during lessons and in their written work
  - sharpening the monitoring and evaluation skills of all leaders and managers, including the way the governing body holds leaders to account
  - using the outcomes of monitoring to secure improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement.

## **Special measures: monitoring of John of Rolleston Primary School**

### **Report from the first monitoring inspection on 12-13 July 2012**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, undertook lesson observations in each phase, some jointly with the headteacher, and scrutinised documents and evaluated pupils' work in Years 2, 3 and 6. They met the headteacher and Early Years Foundation Stage leader, the Chair of the Governing Body, English and mathematics subject leaders, and a representative from the Burton Co-operative Learning Trust. A meeting was held with the business manager to check that recruitment and vetting procedures met government requirements.

#### **Context**

There have been no staffing or leadership changes since March 2012. However, some staff are leaving in July 2012. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has resigned from her post. The job was advertised locally, and interviews were held, but an appointment was not made. The school has recruited, as from September 2102, an experienced supply teacher to work in the Reception Year until further notice. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader position will be re-advertised at the start of the autumn term. The special educational needs coordinator, who works part-time, is leaving at the end of the summer term. The post has been advertised and interviews are taking place in July 2012. Governors anticipate that the post will be filled for October 2012. A teaching assistant is also leaving and plans are in place for the vacancy to be filled by the start of next academic year.

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

Children enter Reception with basic skills that are broadly typical for their age. They make good gains in learning given their original starting points and reach good outcomes by the time that they enter Year 1. This is a similar attainment and performance picture as at the time of the last inspection.

Year 6 attainment has markedly improved from broadly average in 2011 to significantly above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing in July 2012. Year 2 attainment is average in mathematics and writing, but is above average in reading. Standards in reading and mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5 are rising with attainment in these subjects being generally above age-related expectations. However, writing attainment is lower in these years.

School data show that significantly more Year 6 pupils are now achieving the nationally expected levels for their age than in 2011, particularly in writing and

mathematics. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher National Curriculum levels in reading, writing, and mathematics has significantly increased. Unvalidated Year 6 data indicates that the government floor standards for attainment and progress will be met in 2012.

Evidence from lessons shows that pupils' progress is accelerating but it remains inconsistent, particularly in Key Stage 2. For example, Year 3 progress data for the summer term indicates that most pupils made at least satisfactory gains, and around 40% good gains in their learning, in reading, writing and mathematics. However, there are a few pupils who are stuck and their progress since Easter has been too slow, particularly in mathematics. Pupils' reading skills are improving, primarily because the impact of letters and sounds (phonics) work, and structured guided reading sessions, are successfully accelerating learning. Modifications to the mathematics curriculum and more focused interventions in the subject are helping to raise standards, and pupils are starting to make better gains in their learning. The leadership has yet to ensure that the standards achieved in mathematics are consistently above average and pupils make consistently good gains in their learning over time.

Pupils' progress in writing is accelerating, and there is evidence that the writing skills of higher attainers, particularly in Year 2 are improving. This said, the handwriting and spelling skills, particularly of middle and lower attainers are underdeveloped and are holding back success. Not enough pupils are writing in a fluent, joined style and not enough attention is being paid to rectifying spelling errors or getting pupils to self-correct spelling mistakes.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 – satisfactory.

### **The quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching and learning is improving, particularly in Key Stage 2 and inadequate teaching has been successfully eliminated. Teaching is effective in the Early Years Foundation Stage because work is challenging, teacher expectations are high and the curriculum is well matched to their specific needs and interests. Leaders have worked closely with teachers who previously taught inadequate lessons and their input has brought about improvement. This inspection confirms that all teachers are now teaching satisfactorily, expectations as to what pupils can achieve have been raised, and there is some good teaching but little that is outstanding. At present, the proportion of good or outstanding teaching is substantially below the teaching targets set in the school action plan, particularly those specified for December 2012.

Lesson planning is satisfactory but inconsistent. Some teachers are making clear what the level of challenge is for different groups of pupils, but this practice is not universal. On too many plans, the pitch of work to pupils' capabilities is not made sufficiently explicit. In the less effective lessons, and at times where teaching is good, work is not always properly matched to some group or individual needs. The information gained from teacher assessment, and the tracking of pupils' progress, is not always being fully utilised to ensure all pupils are consistently challenged.

The strengths in teaching lie in the good relationships between adults and pupils, which help to create a very positive climate for learning. Behaviour management is good and this means that pupils behave well and learning is not disrupted. In general, teachers have sound subject knowledge and teach concepts securely. The quality of support given by teaching assistants is inconsistent. There are occasions where the support and guidance that they give is very good at moving learning on and boosting pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. However, there are times when the objectives specified in lesson plans are not taught well enough and time is not used wisely. On occasions, the pace of learning when teaching assistants are in charge is either too fast or too slow, and there are times when activities undertaken are not productive ones. In general, teachers are not quality assuring the work of the teaching assistants effectively enough.

The school has agreed spelling and handwriting policies but they are not implemented effectively. For example, too many Year 2 pupils print when writing and their spelling errors are lowering standards in writing. Presentation of work is much improved. Marking has also improved but is inconsistent. For example, Year 3 work scrutiny reveals that marking is more developmental in English than in mathematics.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- Improve the quality of teaching so that no lesson is less than good and the good teaching is further improved to become outstanding – satisfactory.

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

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, as demonstrated by their above average attendance. Pupils have formed good relationships with adults and each other and there is a very positive school ethos. Persistent absence is not a concern and there have been no fixed-term or permanent exclusions this academic year.

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

Strategic leadership and management are much better and the headteacher, senior and middle leaders are working closely with governors and external partners to move the school in the right direction. The school's action plan identifies the most

important weaknesses to be addressed and the activities and resources to drive improvement are explicit. Members of the governing body have attended 'Strengthening Governance' training and new governors are attending training to more effectively equip them for their governor responsibilities. A strategic core group committee has been set up and it effectively evaluates the overall progress made since the school was placed in special measures. Governors are now calling leaders to account and are no longer over-reliant on information supplied by the headteacher and others. Initiatives are starting to be evaluated, for example the outcomes of work scrutiny, and lesson observations are identifying what the school does well and what must be improved. This said, not all important initiatives are subject to rigorous evaluation to determine their impact.

Effective work has been undertaken to ensure that judgements made about attainment are secure. All staff have undergone training to equip them with the necessary skills to fairly and accurately determine attainment in English and mathematics in all years. The tracking of pupils' performance has improved and leaders now have a clear picture of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics in each year. However, the performance of different groups is not sufficiently explicit to inform interventions. The tracking of pupils' progress term-on-term, to measure the extent of improvement over time, is in its infancy.

English and mathematics subject leaders have been well supported by local authority consultants and a leader from the Burton Learning Trust. They say that they have become empowered, and have been given the required time and necessary support and guidance to drive improvement. This has had positive impact in raising teacher expectations in lower Key Stage 2 and improving teaching across the school. They are now more involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work and this is increasing the school's capacity to improve further. Work scrutiny, lesson observations and discussions with pupils have pinpointed teachers' strengths and weaknesses. Senior leaders intend to systematically remedy any individual weaknesses in teaching, but a coherent written plan outlining how this will be done has not been produced as yet, and it is urgently required.

Recruitment and staff vetting procedures meet government requirements. All staff, governors and others who work in school have been suitably checked to confirm their suitability to work with children. The single central register contains all of the required information.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- Bring rigour to the school's monitoring and evaluation to strengthen its capacity to improve – satisfactory.

## **External support**

Local authority English and mathematics consultants and the Burton Co-operative Learning Trust leader are doing a good job. Their work is effective and is well coordinated. Subject leaders speak highly of the external support provided and say that their professional knowledge, teaching expertise and leadership skills have all improved as a consequence of the support that they have received. The statement of action produced in consultation with the local authority fulfilled requirements and was fit for purpose.

External partners undertook an independent review of each of the areas for improvement during the summer term, and provided a report for the strategic core group. Review findings were fair and accurate. Effective support has been provided to the headteacher and Chair of Governors to improve their strategic leadership and management skills. Governors are benefiting from governor training and are now better informed as to their statutory duties and how to call leaders to account.