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8 December 2012

Ian Bateman  
Headteacher  
John of Rolleston Primary School  
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Rolleston-on-Dove  
Burton-on-Trent  
DE13 9AG

Dear Mr Bateman

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

Following my visit to your school on 6–7 December 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 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 – good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed to any year group.

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 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 second monitoring inspection on 6–7 December 2012**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, undertook eight lesson observations, including some jointly with the headteacher. He evaluated pupils' writing in Year 2 and Year 5 mathematics work, jointly with two senior leaders. The inspector met the headteacher, literacy coordinators and the Chair of the Governing Body. A meeting was held with the business manager to check that new staff who had been appointed since the last monitoring visit had been suitably vetted to confirm their suitability to work with children. A range of school documentation was looked at, including the school action plan, pupil performance tracking information, governing body reports and the findings from the most recent review of the school's performance by the local authority.

#### **Context**

The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator resigned from her post at the end of the summer term 2012 and a supply teacher has been employed to teach a Reception class for the autumn term only. A new Early Years Foundation Stage leader has been recruited and will start work in January 2013. A new special educational needs coordinator started work at the beginning of the autumn term 2012. Three new teaching assistants have been employed on temporary contracts until April 2013.

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

Year 6 attainment improved significantly in July 2012 to above average, having been average in 2011. Government floor standards, that set minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress, were met in July 2012. The progress of the oldest pupils accelerated quickly in their final year in school. A much greater proportion of Year 6 pupils achieved the nationally expected and higher National Curriculum levels for their age. Year 2 attainment was average in 2012. It was not as high as in 2011 because teacher assessment was more rigorous and judgements made about standards were more accurate than in the past. Year 1 phonics (letters and sounds) screening data shows that the number of pupils achieving the national standard was similar to the national average. Boys and girls achieved as well as their counterparts nationally. This said, there were a small number of pupils with special educational needs, at school action, who did not make the progress they should.

Evidence from lessons shows that pupils' progress is accelerating at a good rate in nearly all years. The progress that pupils are making as they move through the school is less inconsistent. The proportion of pupils making slow progress continues

to reduce and the more able are making better progress because work is more demanding and teachers' expectations as to what they can achieve are higher. Year 2 work scrutiny reveals that pupils' progress in writing has improved as a result of work to improve pupils' spelling, grammatical and letters and sounds knowledge. Pupils' progress in mathematics in Year 5 requires further improvement. Not enough work is being completed in a wide enough range of mathematical topics to ensure that gaps in pupils' mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding are quickly rectified. Children are making at least the progress they should in Reception from starting points that are broadly typical for their age.

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

- accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 – good.

### **The quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching and learning is improving well. At the time of the first monitoring visit, lesson planning was inconsistent and it did not specify the level of challenge for different groups. Assessment information was not being used effectively to ensure that work was properly matched to pupils' capabilities. Lesson planning is much improved and nearly all plans specify the level of work to be covered by different groups. Assessment information is now used effectively to inform lesson planning and to ensure that work is suitably matched to pupils' specific needs. Teachers' expectations are far higher and the tasks set are more demanding for all groups, in all years. As a result, pupils are more effectively challenged and make better progress in lessons and over time. While planning for adult-led activities in Reception is adequate, the planning for child-initiated learning is not robust enough.

A suitable marking policy has been produced and it is implemented effectively. Feedback given to pupils is developmental and pupils are left in no doubt as to what must be improved. In July 2012, the spelling and handwriting policies were not properly embedded. Revised guidance, and more consistent implementation, has led to improvements in pupils' spelling and sentence construction. Pupils now have individual dictionaries to log words that they find difficult to spell, and activities are regularly completed to ensure that they learn how to spell unfamiliar words or new subject vocabulary. While pupils' letter formation is improving, too many pupils are not writing in a cursive style. Presentation of work is much improved and was good in most of the books scrutinised.

Teaching assistants are now more effectively deployed. The training that they have received has ensured that the pace of learning in the activities that they lead is much better. The quality assurance of their work is much improved and this ensures that lesson objectives are successfully achieved. Strengths in teaching have been

maintained. For example, relationships between staff and pupils continue to be good and a range of appropriate behaviour management strategies are used to ensure that pupils behave well. In July 2102, teachers were not always ensuring that pupils had access to practical resources to support their learning. For example, dictionaries, thesauruses and practical mathematical equipment were not to hand when needed. An investment in new resources, and better access to those that do exist, is ensuring that, in most lessons, pupils have the practical resources that they need to learn.

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

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

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

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they are keen to succeed. Behaviour is good in lessons and in the playground and communal areas. Pupils are friendly and welcoming and show respect for adults and each other. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that any anti-social behaviour is dealt with quickly and effectively. Attendance is good and persistent absence is low. There has been one fixed-term exclusion but no permanent exclusions since March 2012.

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

Senior and middle leaders continue to work closely with governors and external partners to move the school in the right direction. Leaders took notice of the recommendations made in the first monitoring report. A revised action plan was produced to ensure that work was appropriately focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning and the leadership skills, particularly of English and mathematics leaders, in order to build the school's capacity to improve further. As a result, lesson planning is much improved and work is better matched to pupils' capabilities, resulting in pupils in all years making better gains in their learning.

The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is more coherent and targeted interventions are speeding up the rate of progress for individuals and groups of pupils. A suitable plan is in place to support the small number of teachers who require improvement, and there is evidence that individuals have improved their teaching practice as a result of the support and guidance that they have received. The tracking of pupils' progress is much sharper and the progress pupils make each term is clear. This said, the analysis of the attainment and progress of those entitled to free school meals and with special educational needs is not sufficiently explicit.

The English leaders have produced revised spelling, handwriting and presentation guidance and have ensured that it is suitably implemented. Targeted monitoring of teaching and pupils' work, by English and mathematics leaders, has identified what

is working well and what must be improved. Written and verbal feedback is given to staff and areas for improvement are clearly identified, resulting in improved provision and outcomes. Teaching assistants have benefited from viewing good practice in other schools, and effective teaching and learning methods are being successfully incorporated into their own work.

All governors have undertaken 'Strengthening Governance' training to improve strategic leadership and to ensure that they fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively. A scrutiny committee suitably oversees the progress made since the school was placed in special measures. Governors are allocated a subject responsibility and they visit the school, but the purpose of the visit is not always made clear and written findings are not always produced so others know what the outcomes of the visit were. The Chair of the Governing Body is currently seeking the views of a wide range of stakeholders to identify what is working well and what must be improved. The findings are to be produced in due course in order to inform future work. He is aware that the school lacks a clear vision statement that sets out the values and the methods to be adopted to become an outstanding school. An appropriate appraisal system is in place and staff are set suitable objectives, including targets to improve pupils' progress, which are reviewed twice a year. The governing body oversees performance management arrangements but does not have written criteria to inform its decision-making. Governors are ensuring the financial stability of the school and ensure that it lives within its means. The newly formed Parent Focus group is improving communication between the school and parents, carers and the wider community. The early signs are that communication between all parties has improved and that the regular sharing of information and better feedback is appreciated by all stakeholders.

Recruitment and staff vetting arrangements meet government requirements. All staff appointed since July 2012 have been appropriately vetted to confirm their suitability to work with children. The single central register contains all of the required information.

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

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

### **External support**

The support provided by the local authority and the Burton Co-operative Trust was 'front loaded' and occurred mainly in the summer term 2012. It has been effective in improving the quality of education provided. Leaders now have the required self-evaluation tools and the necessary leadership skills to move the school forward. It is right that the level of external support reduces as leaders learn to 'stand on their

own two feet' and take responsibility for leading initiatives and suitably monitor their outcomes.

Support and guidance continues in specific areas; for example, providing training to improve marking procedures and to widen the range of problem-solving activities in mathematics. External moderation of the standards achieved has ensured that attainment judgements are accurate and reliable, particularly at the end of Years 2 and 6. The English and mathematics leaders have benefited from their half-termly meeting with local authority staff to review the quality of provision and its impact and to re-skill subject leaders so that they have the necessary professional qualities and skills to raise standards further. The most recent review of the school's progress by the local authority produced a fair and accurate evaluation of the progress made since March 2012.