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7 March 2013

Mrs Sandra Lawlor  
Headteacher  
Padnell Junior School  
Padnell Road  
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PO8 8EA

Dear Mrs Lawlor

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of Padnell Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 5–6 March 2013, 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 third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in February 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

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

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 Hampshire.

Yours sincerely

Christine Jones  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Raise pupils' achievement, especially in writing and mathematics, so that attainment by the end of Year 6 is at least average and pupils make at least the expected progress by:
  - making consistent use of assessment data so that the level of challenge is better matched to the needs of all groups of pupils
  - ensuring that writing tasks engage all pupils, especially boys
  - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations for pupils' handwriting and presentation
  - giving pupils clear and precise feedback on what they need to do to improve the quality of their writing
  - setting high expectations for the quality of writing in all subjects.
  
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so that all pupils make the levels of progress of which they are capable in all areas by:
  - providing teachers with clear guidance about strengths and areas for development in their teaching
  - ensuring teachers check on pupils' progress during lessons and make any necessary adjustments to meet their needs
  - using targeted questions effectively to check pupils' understanding, extend their thinking and provide greater challenge
  - making sure that the pace of lessons is brisk and that pupils are fully engaged at all times
  - sharing good practice and setting clear expectations for all staff.
  
- Improve the work of all leaders and managers, including the governing body, so that they all play an effective role in driving the school's improvement by:
  - rigorously monitoring the impact of actions which seek to bring about improvements
  - monitoring the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress, especially on boys' writing
  - ensuring that the governing body is more rigorous in holding the school to account.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Padnell Junior School**

### **Report from the third monitoring inspection on 5–6 March 2013**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and pupils' books and met with the headteacher and other staff, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.

#### **Context**

Since the last visit the acting deputy headteacher has now taken up the substantive post. There have been no other significant staffing changes. The membership of the governing body is now stable, although two vacancies remain. Early indications are that the number of first choice requests from parents and carers for their children to come to the school in Year 3 has increased significantly.

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

The school now tracks pupils' achievement closely and this produces comprehensive information on pupils' performance. Regular assessments give a clearer picture of current attainment and progress and indicate that pupils are making better progress overall. Most Year 6 pupils are on course to make at least expected progress in reading and mathematics and are reaching standards in those areas that are appropriate for their age. Standards are not improving as quickly in writing and, although progress is being made, this is not fast enough for pupils to reach the levels they should.

Similarly, in other year groups more pupils are on track to make appropriate progress in reading and mathematics than in writing. Inspection evidence confirms there is an overall improvement but pupils' books also show that progress in writing lags behind that in reading and mathematics. Pupils who are eligible for free school meals and in receipt of additional pupil premium funding made at least as much progress compared to other pupils in the class. The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also improving although the standards they reach remain behind those of other pupils and achievement in writing is again an issue.

Assessment strategies are now more clearly understood by pupils and teachers. Pupils know what level they are working at and their understanding of what they need to do to improve is now more secure. However, they do say that they are not always given enough opportunities by their teachers to move on to work that is at a higher level.

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

- Raise pupils' achievement, especially in writing and mathematics, so that attainment by the end of Year 6 is at least average and pupils make at least the expected progress – satisfactory

### **The quality of teaching**

The overall quality of teaching continues to improve as intensive coaching means that more teachers are aware of what good teaching looks like. They are better able to plan for lessons that are designed to meet a wider range of pupils' needs. Teachers have an improving understanding of the need to check on pupils' progress as the lesson proceeds in order to adapt and adjust future learning but this is not always done consistently. As one pupil remarked, 'Our teachers do not always give us things to do that really make us think hard.' Teachers' use of questioning to challenge pupils is improving but frequently focuses on only a few pupils and does not target the full range of abilities in the class. The point of the lesson is made clear to the pupils from the start where teachers share the learning intentions with the class. Too often these learning intentions are focused on what the pupils are going to do rather than what they are going to learn. Not all teachers have high enough expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation in all subjects and this is hindering progress.

As at the previous visit, pupils again commented that their work, particularly in mathematics, is 'not really hard enough'. They find their lessons are sometimes boring and too repetitive especially where teachers go over what they already know. Pupils are clear that teachers sometimes talk too much in lessons and this does not help them learn. Inspection evidence supports this as the pace of learning in these teacher directed sessions is often too slow. Pupils learn best where the activities are exciting and engaging, for example, Year 6 pupils worked well in a business and enterprise session where they were using a wide range of social and learning skills.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so that all pupils make the levels of progress of which they are capable in all areas – satisfactory

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' attitudes towards learning and their engagement in lessons have improved since the last visit. There is now a more purposeful working atmosphere as the pace of learning has improved. Pupils understand that good behaviour helps them to learn and they are able of maintaining this in lessons. They do acknowledge that other pupils sometimes talk over the teacher in lessons and this interferes with their learning.

Pupils are very positive about being members of this school community. They appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them ranging from cheerleading to karate. They feel safe in school and are well looked after. Bullying is not seen as a major problem although pupils feel it is not always dealt with as seriously and promptly as they would like, for example, at lunchtimes.

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

The recent appointment to the substantive deputy headteacher post has strengthened the senior leadership team. The senior leadership team now carries nearly all the major responsibilities in the school and urgently needs to look at the most efficient way for organising and structuring the team to lead further improvements. The systems for monitoring pupils' performance are now embedded into everyday working practices. These produce accurate data that can be used to identify both successes and underachievement. In addition the quality of teaching is now monitored accurately and gives a clearer overall view of the quality of education across the school. While this information informs judgements on pupils' progress, it is not always used to rigorously follow up on the effectiveness and impact of actions that seek to bring about improvements.

The governing body is now much stronger with a clearer view of its role in the strategic direction of the school. Governors are more rigorous in holding the school to account for improvements in teaching and learning although they need to be more focused on particular weaker areas such as standards in writing.

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

- Improve the work of all leaders and managers, including the governing body, so that they all play an effective role in driving the school's improvement – satisfactory

## **External support**

The local authority continues to provide a sharply focused programme of support and review that continues to help drive improvement in the school. For example, focused support in English and literacy is improving planning for effective guided writing activities. Support for improving standards in mathematics has been particularly effective, especially the five day mathematics course run at the school and including teachers from other schools. The school is willing to seek input from other schools and makes use of experts from local secondary and other schools to model and coach good practice in teaching.