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25 April 2013

Mr Daniel Knuckey  
Acting headteacher  
Iver Heath Junior School  
St Margaret's Close  
Iver Heath  
SL0 0DA

Dear Mr Knuckey

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of Iver Heath Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 23 and 24 April 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 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 – good.

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 Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Buckinghamshire.

Yours sincerely

James Henry  
**Additional inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Ensure safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements by:
  - immediately implementing regular risk assessments for school activities and reviewing them on a regular basis
  - immediately providing adequate supervision at break and lunchtimes
  - providing child protection training for all staff as soon as practical.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching in all year groups by:
  - ensuring teachers make more effective use of data about pupils' prior learning when planning lessons
  - providing all pupils, particularly the more able, with work that is consistently challenging
  - ensuring greater consistency in teachers marking and that best practice is shared across the school
  - providing a better balance between the time used by the teacher for explaining activities and the amount of time pupils have for completing tasks
  - ensuring lesson activities are better targeted on groups of pupils who are underachieving, for example boys in writing.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - developing the skills and experience of middle leaders so that they are effective in raising the quality of teaching
  - improving systems for identifying the progress made by pupils from different groups
  - improving planning and evaluation for community cohesion and for ensuring all pupils have equal opportunity
  - making more effective use of others who work with the school to improve pupils' achievements
  - ensuring the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the school in order to bring about improvement.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Iver Heath Junior School**

### **Report from the third monitoring inspection on 23 and 24 April 2013.**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher, senior and middle leaders and members of the interim executive board of governors. The inspector visited 12 lessons or part lessons, eight in conjunction with the acting headteacher, observed eight teachers and talked to a group of pupils.

#### **Context**

Since the last inspection a new permanent teacher has been appointed to teach a Year 4 class and a new senior midday supervisor has been appointed to take responsibility for overseeing pupils' safety and behaviour during lunch times.

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

School assessments show that pupils in Year 6 are on track to maintain attainment in English and mathematics achieved by pupils in 2012, which was broadly in-line with the national average. Also assessments show that an increasing number of pupils are on track to achieve the higher level 5 in reading compared to achievement in 2012.

Lesson observations, assessments of pupil progress and pupils work show that they are making more consistent accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics, especially in Years 3 and 4. This is an improvement since the last inspection and consequently attainment is rising across the school.

Different groups of pupils are making more consistent accelerated progress due to effective monitoring and extra support to help both individuals and groups who may be falling behind to catch up. For example, pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are carefully tracked and supported to ensure they make accelerated progress and as a result the school is beginning to close the gap for this group and raise their achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. While disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making better progress, there is some inconsistency in their progress in mathematics compared with other groups of pupils, especially in Years 4, 5 and 6.

However, there are still inconsistencies in the progress made in different subjects overall. For example, pupils make better progress overall in reading than in writing

and mathematics and pupils progress in mathematics is better overall than in writing.

### **The quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching continues to improve. Teacher planning is regularly based on assessments of pupils' abilities and as a result tasks are more consistently matched to their needs. For example, in English and mathematics, pupils are taught in groups according to their abilities. However teachers still plan different activities within these groups even though their abilities are broadly similar. Consequently, tasks in lessons are generally more challenging, especially for the more able. However there are occasions, particularly in mathematics, where teachers plan tasks that are too hard, especially for less able pupils, or where pupils have not fully understood an idea before the teacher moves on to the next activity.

There is a consistent approach to marking across the school. This allows pupils to respond to comments made by teachers and helps teachers to assess pupils understanding of their learning in lessons. Pupils appreciate the marking system and as one pupil commented 'It's like having a conversation with your teacher'.

Pupils are regularly involved in lessons through practical activities and working with each other rather than listening to over long explanations. However, there are occasions when teachers miss opportunities to correct misconceptions or re-enforce pupils learning through direct explanations as well as encouraging pupils to learn for themselves.

Teachers are using data from pupil assessments to identify and plan activities for any groups who may be underachieving to help pupils catch up. For example, an initiative called 'Magical Writers' focused on improving the basic grammar of a group of boys in Year 3.

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

- improve the quality of teaching – good.

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

Pupils have positive attitudes to school and say that they enjoy school and feel safe. Pupils appreciate the school system for managing behaviour and feel that behaviour is generally good with pupils getting on well with each other and adults in the school. The school has an effective system to record any instances of inappropriate behaviour that include any actions and sanctions that may have been taken. There was no disruption to learning in lessons observed during the inspection.

Playground observations show that pupils continue to enjoy the playground because they are well supervised and occupied in playing with games equipment in a well organised environment. The movement of pupils in and out of the building is also well organised so that dinner staff can ensure proper supervision if pupils do have to leave the playground.

Attendance is broadly in-line with the national average and most pupils are punctual for school.

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

The acting headteacher, supported by the acting deputy headteacher, continues to bring about improvements in the school through implementing clear school improvement plans that focus sharply on raising expectations especially in improving the quality of teaching. The impact can clearly be seen through observations of lessons where pupils are making better progress because teaching is improving and shows the school has the capacity to continue to improve.

The acting deputy head teacher is working effectively with middle leaders to improve their leadership skills. Individual action plans have been agreed with middle leaders to meet their own particular needs and subjects. Initiatives have begun, such as beginning to link subjects together to make learning more meaningful and enjoyable for pupils, but these are at an early stage of development. While middle leaders have undertaken monitoring activities such as reviewing teacher planning they do not undertake regular lesson observations to improve the quality of teaching.

Systems to track pupils' progress are now embedded and used regularly by teachers as well as senior staff to identify the progress of both individual and different groups of pupils. Data from the pupil tracking system is used by senior leaders to hold staff to account for the progress of pupils in their classes through regular pupil progress meetings. Also the overall analysis of pupils' progress and attainment is providing valuable information to accurately inform senior leaders and the interim executive board about the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

The school has begun to implement a plan to promote community cohesion and this is an improvement since the last inspection. One target is to work more closely with parents and carers to involve them in the education of their children and as a result of improved communications almost all pupil's parents and carers attended the last parental consultation evening.

School records show that the school is working more effectively with other professional agencies, such as speech and language specialists and social services, to support vulnerable families when necessary.

The interim executive board continue to provide an effective level of challenge balanced with positive support for the school. For example receiving and questioning reports from middle leaders about initiatives to improve the curriculum. A shadow governing body has been established and is being mentored by members of the interim executive board. However, this initiative is at an early stage of development and the shadow governing body has not had time to make a difference to raising achievement and improving the work of the school.

Since the last inspection the school has successfully undergone a health and safety audit by the local authority. This included reviewing the school risk assessments for both in the school building and for off-site school activities and shows that risk assessment procedures are being embedded in school.

The appointment of a new senior dinner supervisor has helped to ensure the school continues to provide appropriate and adequate supervision at lunchtimes. Also the newly appointed staff have been inducted into the school safeguarding procedures and received appropriate child protection training. All staff have undergone checks to ensure they are suitable to work in schools and have undertaken appropriate child protection training.

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

- ensure safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements – good
- improve the effectiveness of leadership and management – good.

### **External support**

The local authority continue to provide positive support for the school through regularly monitoring the quality of teaching although support is gradually been withdrawn according to the needs of the school. However the local authority has arranged for the acting headteacher to be supported by an experienced headteacher from a local school. This is having a positive impact through providing guidance and advice to senior leaders.