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19 September 2013

Ms Kudsia Batool  
Pear Tree Community Junior School  
Pear Tree Street  
Derby  
DE23 8PN

Dear Ms Batool

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Pear Tree Community Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 17–18 September 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in November 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.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is not making enough progress towards the removal of special measures.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published 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 Derby.

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
  - lessons proceed quickly and teachers' expectations of pupils' learning are high
  - teachers spend less time telling pupils what they have to learn and that they provide more opportunities for them to learn things for themselves
  - work provided is matched closely to pupils' different abilities so it is neither too hard nor too easy
  - best practice in teaching is shared within the school.
  
- Improve behaviour by ensuring that:
  - a clear behaviour policy is agreed and consistently applied by all staff
  - the school promotes positive relationships and respect between pupils
  - all incidents are logged and that all the actions taken are effective and followed up.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - making expectations of good teaching clear to all staff
  - developing and applying thorough and accurate systems to check the quality of teaching
  - giving teachers clear targets for improvement and checking that these are achieved, ensuring the interim executive board checks that all groups of pupils are making good progress regularly.
  
- Promote the importance of attendance to pupils and parents so rates rise to at least the national average.

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 17–18 September 2013**

### **Evidence**

I observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with you, the assistant headteacher, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and representatives from the local authority.

### **Context**

You have very recently been appointed as the new headteacher, three class teachers have left the school and have been replaced with three new appointments to the teaching staff. Three teaching assistants have been appointed and a new appointment has been made with effect from 1 November 2013 for a teaching and learning manager.

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

Too many pupils continue to make inadequate progress. Pupils' achievement is variable across the school and pupils' progress, especially in writing, is limited. This is because weaknesses in teaching persist. End of year results for Key Stage 2 show pupils' achievements have declined considerably from the previous year. Current data held by the school show pupils are not catching up with their learning and underperformance remains. This indicates that the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress, will not be met.

Although there are plans to monitor the performance of individuals and groups more rigorously, this has not been done so far. As a result, leaders do not have a sufficient understanding of how well groups of pupils are performing. Progress for those pupils who are eligible for pupil premium (which provides additional government funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is unclear. This is because the funding is not used carefully enough or monitored sufficiently to see how effectively it is used.

A range of interventions have recently been put in place to help pupils catch up with their learning. Staff are developing their understanding of how to support pupils to make better progress but so far there is no evidence to show the support has made a difference to pupils' achievements.

### **The quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is not strong enough to help pupils to make better progress. Almost all the teaching observed during the inspection was either inadequate or required improvement. This is because learning opportunities are not maximised for

all pupils and teachers and teaching assistants do not fully meet the needs of the learners. Too little emphasis is given to developing basic skills in English and mathematics, and pupils who find communication skills challenging are not given enough support to help them improve.

Teachers are not using assessments enough to match work to individual pupils' needs and too many activities lack relevance and purpose. This hinders the progress pupils make. Teaching assistants are predominately used to support the lower ability pupils. In a few cases, they are used well and their support helps pupils to make progress. In other cases, however, they do not give pupils the support they require to be successful.

In too many lessons, pupils are unclear about what is expected of them and they do not fully understand what they need to do to be successful. Activities lack challenge, especially for the more able pupils, and lessons are often not focused on pupils' interests. For example, pupils are asked to complete a worksheet rather than apply their learning to a topic they are interested in.

Some teaching is more effective. In these lessons, pupils' learning is extended by effective questioning. The teacher knows what pupils are capable of achieving and carefully supports them in their learning.

Pupils report that teaching has improved. One pupil told me, 'Teachers help us when we don't understand,' and 'lessons have got harder and we get a better education now'. The teaching observed during the inspection did not support this view.

Marking is variable across subjects and classes. In some cases, it is helpful in guiding pupils in how to improve and pupils respond back to the teacher's comments. However, often marking is purely celebratory and does not show pupils how to improve their work.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils say that behaviour has improved, both in lessons and outside the classroom. Where pupils are engaged in their learning, behaviour is more positive. However, where teaching is weaker, pupils are less engaged and they lose interest in completing their work.

New behaviour procedures and policy have been implemented. There is a greater emphasis on encouraging positive behaviour, and procedures outline clear expectations of what pupils should and should not do. Pupils understand the sanctions if they misbehave.

Outside the classroom, pupils report that behaviour is better and, as one pupil said, 'We don't allow bullying in this school.' Pupils report that mid-day supervisors are

keen to intervene when a problem arises but they also stated that teachers do not always react quickly enough when problems occur.

Attendance rates have improved. A focus on encouraging pupils to attend school regularly is paying dividends, and leaders are working closely with the Education Welfare Officer.

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

Although you have only been in post for a very short time, you have quickly and accurately identified what needs to be done to bring about the much-needed change. You have clear plans for how to improve the school and have quite rightly identified that the quality of teaching is not good enough. You have increased the emphasis on improving outcomes for all pupils through raising the quality of teaching. You are using the standards that teachers should achieve well to support the way in which you manage their performance.

The well-led interim executive board continues to monitor the school. They focus on how the school is improving and question leaders about key areas for improvement. They have high expectations and provide both effective support and challenge to leaders at all levels. The strong partnership between the local authority, the interim executive board and headteacher has resulted in the school holding a more strategic view to support improvement.

At the present time, there is insufficient distributive leadership, as roles and responsibilities for key staff are still developing. For example, there is currently no leader for numeracy, and phase leaders require training in how to better hold teachers to account.

### **External support**

The local authority has supported the interim executive board in the appointment of key staff. They continue to monitor the school's performance and provide both support and challenge on a regular basis. They have facilitated links with schools and key personnel which are leading to the strengthening of leadership; for example, securing the appointment of the teaching and learning manager. The education welfare service is now regularly in school and is helping to improve attendance.