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24 January 2014

Mrs Barbara Deacon  
The Headteacher  
King's Stanley CofE Primary School  
Broad Street  
King's Stanley  
Stonehouse  
GL10 3PN

Dear Mrs Deacon

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of King's Stanley CofE Primary School**

Following my visit with Fran Ashworth, Additional Inspector, to your school on 22 and 23 January 2014, 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 you have taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in May 2013. 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 making reasonable 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 Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Gloucestershire and the Diocese of Gloucester.

Yours sincerely  
Jonathan Palk  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2013**

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, by ensuring teachers:
  - do not talk for too long and allow pupils to start their learning activities more promptly
  - assess pupils' attainment frequently and accurately, and use this information to provide activities that extend all abilities
  - make sure pupils know their targets and what they need to do to work towards them
  - give pupils sufficient opportunities to respond to their marking and make the necessary improvements.
- Improve pupils' achievement, especially in reading, by:
  - ensuring teachers teach higher-level reading skills effectively and give pupils the opportunities to apply these skills when reading in other subjects
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking and reflect on their learning.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that school leaders track pupils' progress more efficiently and accurately
  - making sure leaders check the quality of teaching more thoroughly, and use performance management better to drive up the quality of teaching
  - making sure that checks on how well the school's actions are working are accurate and based on the measurable impact on learning, in particular the checks on the support for pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium
  - making sure that improvement plans are based on the correct priorities, have clear targets for raising achievement and are implemented rigorously
  - developing the skills and knowledge of the governing body so they can check the school's work for themselves and hold leaders to account more effectively.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 22 and 23 January 2014**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, visited 15 lessons, 10 jointly with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher, scrutinised documents and reviewed pupils' written work. The inspectors heard a sample of pupils reading from each Key Stage 2 class. They met with school leaders to discuss aspects of their work and also met with six members of the governing body.

### **Context**

The governing body appointed a deputy headteacher, who joined the school at the end of October. The post is temporary until the end of August 2014.

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

Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2013 was above average. This is an improvement on previous years. This group of pupils reached above average standards when they took their letters and sounds check in Year 1 and continue to make good progress in their reading. The pupils who are now in Year 2 also did well in the letters and sounds check last year. Pupils' attainment in the Key Stage 2 national tests and assessments is broadly average. More able pupils did better in reading and mathematics than in writing and grammar. Most pupils made the progress expected of them. Pupils who are entitled to free school meals achieved less well than the picture nationally for this group and in relation to their peers in the school. The numbers are small, but this has been the case for some years. There is a similar picture of underachievement for those pupils with special educational needs.

The observations of learning in lessons and from looking at pupils' books indicate that achievement is improving for most groups across the school. More able pupils have responded positively to more exacting reading books. The reading books have just enough challenge to ensure that reading remains a pleasure, whilst increasing their ability to learn new words. The exposure to the challenging structure of harder text books is having a good effect on their writing. All pupils are benefiting from much more relevant texts matched to their ability. You have improved the layout of the central area and this now has the feel of a reading area.

The one-to-one support you are offering those pupils who are in receipt of pupil premium funding has been very successful. Their progress is now good and they are closing the gaps on age-related expectations quickly. You have tightened up the teacher assessments of pupils' attainment by introducing reading tests and asking that teachers work together when they use checklists to judge pupils' writing and mathematics. Initially, this means some pupils appear to have gone backwards and have further to travel to meet the expectations you have set for the year group. However, the process is helping teachers precisely identify the skills pupils need to

learn and accurately measure their progress. This is also ensuring realistic targets are set for pupils in their lessons.

### **The quality of teaching**

Learning in lessons is being transformed. The deputy headteacher has brought with him plenty of expertise in evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and this has been moderated by observations from local authority consultants. The response to ineffective learning has been swift. The improved lesson planning, combined with clearer instructions given to pupils in lessons, means more learning is going on. The sharper focus on marking pupils' work against the expectations set for pupils is effective.

Inspectors observed a range of teaching. Overall, there is a strong base of good teaching in the school. In the best lessons, work given to pupils is well matched to their needs. The introduction of precise targets, that the pupils understand, helps them check on how hard they are working. There are still lessons where the more able pupils are not given enough to do or of a quality that helps them move forward.

The teaching of reading has improved since adjustments have been made to the organisation of reading lessons. The use of reading tests to group pupils and engaging books are ensuring these are highly effective lessons. In writing lessons the teachers appeared more confident in setting pupils appropriate tasks that they could do on their own, so they could get on and teach groups or individuals without distractions. This is showing that they are using smartly the information they have about pupils' progress.

Lessons in general are engaging and there is plenty of variety so that pupils are kept on their toes. Work is thoroughly marked. Suggestions on how to improve are made, but the time for corrections is too short for some pupils. Teaching assistant support is measured and allows for pupils to try things out for themselves. There are still lessons where pupils wait for the teacher rather than having a go themselves.

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

Pupils behave well. They come into school eager to learn and listen attentively to their teachers. In lessons they help each other learn by listening to each other and sharing ideas. Children in the Reception class enthusiastically helped the teacher prepare the classroom for lessons. Pupils enjoy school. They are prompt to school in the morning and their attendance is good. Pupils are safe in school. Older pupils look after younger ones at playtimes. There are good levels of supervision in and around the school. Pupils and adults know who to go to if they have concerns about keeping each other safe.

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

There has been a significant improvement in the quality of leadership and management. The temporary appointment of a deputy headteacher has provided

expertise and support for you. This, combined with a much improved school improvement plan, provides a clear steer for your actions to improve learning. The staff responsibilities for helping manage the changes have been made clear. There has been a substantial amount of training to help them carry out their roles effectively.

The immediate review of actions, such as the new marking policy, target setting and lesson planning procedures, signals an appetite to check that changes are making a difference. The methods used are helping staff improve their teaching by deepening their understanding of how well individuals are learning.

The feedback to teachers following lessons observations is honest. Feedback offers praise where this is due, but did not draw back from identifying what must get better. A strong aspect of the performance management process is the organisation of additional training from more experienced colleagues. The programme of weekly staff meetings to discuss effectiveness, combined with a programme of visits to other schools to observe good and outstanding teachers, has helped raise teachers' expectations of their performance.

Governors are better informed about what is going on in school. You regularly share progress tracking information with them and they are aware of where the gaps are when compared to expectations of pupils' performance nationally. They are regular visitors to the school. They have made a start on helping you review the benefits of actions, such as the parent reading workshop. They have still to implement the results of the external review of governance and evaluate just how effectively the additional pupil premium funding is making a difference.

### **External support**

The local authority has provided highly effective support to the school. This has ranged from specialist support in restructuring staff's roles and responsibilities to identifying schools where teachers can observe good and outstanding teaching. Importantly, they have financially supported the governing body's appointment of an experienced deputy headteacher to help you manage the changes required. Their support for an effective professional development programme has strengthened the capacity of the school leaders and managers to implement improvements rapidly. Consequently, they have judged it is time to begin to step back from such active engagement whilst retaining an oversight of the school's current effectiveness.