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26 June 2014

Jerry Seward  
Acting Headteacher  
Newport Church of England Aided Primary School  
Hazel Close  
Carisbrooke Meadows  
Newport  
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PO30 5GD

Dear Mr Seaward

**Special measures monitoring inspection of Newport Church of England Aided Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 24 and 25 June 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 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 April 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 and the Director of Children's Services for the Isle of Wight.

Yours sincerely

Siân Thornton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

#### **■ Ensure no teaching is inadequate and increase the proportion of good or better teaching, by:**

- making sure teachers have the chance to observe good teaching and providing support during lessons so that they know what good teaching looks like and can share this practice with one another
- making sure teachers increase the pace of lessons and expect pupils to complete their work with more urgency
- making sure teachers use the information they have about the progress of pupils, particularly the more able, to give them work which is more challenging and more closely builds on what they already know and can do
- giving pupils more opportunities to practise and develop their numeracy and literacy skills in a range of situations and across different subjects.

#### **■ Increase pupils' progress and raise their attainment in English and mathematics, by:**

- making sure staff have higher expectations of what pupils can do in every lesson
- giving pupils more opportunity to respond to the comments in their books from teachers' marking
- frequently involving pupils in assessing the progress they are making towards their targets.

#### **■ Urgently increase the effectiveness of senior leaders in bringing about improvements in teaching by:**

- making sure that there is an appropriate leadership structure in place across the school, and that leaders identify issues and introduce solutions
- giving teachers precise feedback about what they need to do to improve, and showing them how to do so
- providing a clear, well-structured framework for the development of pupils' skills and knowledge, right across the school, around which teachers can plan their work.

#### **■ Improve the support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and accelerate their progress rapidly, by:**

- further developing the systems to identify which pupils need support, and when they may have overcome their difficulties
- helping leaders to monitor the effectiveness of the support provided for these pupils and rapidly making changes where support is not making enough difference.

- **Make sure that governors gather more first-hand evidence to check the views of senior leaders and use this to challenge the school, by:**
  - undertaking training to understand the data about the school in greater detail and how these compare with schools nationally
  - developing the systems for the performance management of the headteacher and senior leaders, to support them and hold them accountable for bringing about rapid improvements.

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 third monitoring inspection on 24 and 25 June 2014**

### **Evidence**

The inspector observed learning in every classroom, and looked at pupils' books and teachers' planning. Records of pupils' progress were examined, together with the most recent school improvement plans and the local authority statement of action. Other documentation was considered, including local authority reports, the school's records of checks on teaching, reports about attendance and behaviour, and governing body minutes. Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the inclusion leader, and mathematics and English leaders. The inspector met with a group of pupils and talked with parents and carers in the playground at the start of both days.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection, the acting headteacher's appointment has been made permanent with effect from 1 September 2014. Temporary class teachers in Year 4 and Year 5 have been changed. One of the current temporary teachers has been appointed to remain at the school for one year from September. Two additional learning support assistants have been appointed to work in Year 4, and three additional lunchtime supervisors have been recruited. A play leader has been appointed, a new business manager has joined the office team, and a new clerk to the governing body has been employed. The headteacher from Christ The King school continues in her advisory role as Executive Headteacher. The governing body has agreed that this will continue until the school is removed from special measures, reducing to one day a week from September.

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

Pupils' progress is improving in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups. This includes pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs, and pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils entitled to free school meals and those in the care of the local authority). However, this improvement varies between classes and subjects. In every class, pupils supported by the pupil premium still make less progress than their peers, although in most classes, this gap is now small.

The school now has reliable information about pupils' progress. This is because teachers have been well trained, pupils are now more regularly assessed and teachers' records are thoroughly checked. All pupils now have relevant targets for their next steps in English and mathematics, but these are sometimes written by the teacher in a way which pupils do not understand. Sometimes, pupils cannot achieve their targets in mathematics, because the class is not studying the relevant aspect of mathematical skill.

Many pupils now show a greater ability to concentrate on their work, and try hard to succeed. When pupils understand their targets, these make a real difference to their efforts and success. Some pupils are keen to get to work during lessons, although many pupils, especially in the older classes, still work too slowly, or fail to keep their efforts up for the whole session. This continues to limit what pupils achieve, including some of the most able.

Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 this year have done much better than previous year groups in the national check of pupils' knowledge about letters and sounds (phonics). However, this is largely the result of additional specialist teaching.

In the Reception class, the school's information shows that many more children, this year, are now ready for the challenges and opportunities of Year 1 and beyond.

### **The quality of teaching**

Improving teaching throughout the school is leading to improving progress. Good elements in teaching are becoming increasingly consistent, and are now evident in all year groups. In some classes and year groups, teaching is now consistently good. However, a significant proportion of the teaching of phonics to younger pupils remains inadequate.

Teachers have regular opportunities to observe good teaching, when leaders work effectively alongside them. This activity has been ably led by the deputy headteacher, who has ensured that leaders, themselves, improve and maintain the standard of their own teaching so that they provide a credible and secure example for others. Teachers have not yet had the opportunities they need to observe good teaching in other schools.

Teachers now make better use of information about pupils' progress to plan appropriate sequences of learning for their whole class, for groups and for individual pupils. Despite this, teachers' planning still focuses too much on stating what pupils are going to do, rather than what teachers intend them to learn. The school has recently introduced a new policy, which sets out a more organised approach to teaching about calculations in mathematics. This includes helpful ways to demonstrate and explain mathematical concepts, by using visual images and practical equipment. As a result, all teachers and learning support assistants are now better equipped to help pupils learn more quickly and securely. This helpful information has also been made available to parents and carers through the school's website.

Teachers have received valuable training about how to move learning on for specific groups of pupils in a lesson, while supporting others to repeat or consolidate their understanding. As a result, the pace of learning for all pupils is improving in most classes. Nevertheless, some pupils still have to wait for too long while their teacher

explains something which they already understand to others. This affects pupils' interest and motivation, especially the most able.

Improvements in teachers' marking are now well established, especially in English. Pupils value their teachers' thoughtful comments and often respond conscientiously to them. There are frequent examples in all classes of pupils effectively checking their own work, or that of their peers, before the teacher marks. This is helping pupils to take more responsibility for their own progress. By comparison, marking and feedback seen in mathematics books is less well developed.

Teachers now provide regular opportunities for pupils to use their reading, writing and mathematical skills in other subjects. Some pupils say that this happens most often with reading and writing, and that they do not spend as much time practising their mathematics; which they say they would enjoy.

Problem-solving practical activities are an increasingly regular and useful feature of mathematics lessons. These provide valuable opportunities for pupils to make their own decisions about which resources to use, and how to record their findings. As a result, many pupils show an increasing level of interest, discipline and persistence, and this is transferring into other areas of their learning. In the best mathematics lessons, teachers provide a manageable range of these activities. Sometimes, though, lessons are overcomplicated, so that pupils have to wait for help while their teacher manages too many different activities at once.

Learning support assistants now provide more effective help for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, especially when they work with these pupils individually. During whole-class lessons, the effectiveness of this assistance remains inconsistent, despite the school providing clear "non-negotiable" expectations.

Purposeful displays, which support learning well, have been developed in classrooms and shared areas. Pupils refer readily to this information during lessons or when they are learning away from the class. In some cases, these displays have become overcrowded, making it difficult for pupils to access the information they are looking for easily, especially those with special educational needs.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils enjoy coming to school and behave increasingly well. Instances of disruptive behaviour during learning are extremely rare, and these are managed successfully if they do occur.

Pupils are responding well to their teachers' raised expectations. In a Year 5 lesson, a group of boys could hardly write fast enough to record all their ideas, as soon as the teacher set them to work. In Year 3, pupils working in groups away from the teacher stayed diligently on task as they planned their writing, based on a D-Day photograph. In Year 2, half the class worked their way sensibly and independently

through a sequence of number puzzles, in different locations around the room, while the teacher and teaching assistant worked with focus groups. However, some older pupils still do not work at the pace which their teacher plans. They still find it challenging to stay on task independently, to think quickly, to answer a question at length, or to write for a sustained period. This is limiting progress, including for some of the most-able pupils.

Supervision has been increased at lunchtime, with continuing training for staff. A new play leader now supports positive play and the use of new equipment. Rotas ensure fair access to spaces and equipment. Playtimes are happier when pupils can access the school field in addition to the relatively small playground, although this is only possible during good weather. With pupils being expected to work harder during lesson time, senior leaders and governors are working well together to make sure that pupils' social times continue to be refreshing, happy and safe.

Parents and carers who spoke with the inspector were overwhelmingly positive about the school, its leaders and staff. If parents and carers had a concern, they said that they had spoken with the school and found their worries were taken seriously and resolved. Some parents and carers regretted the number of staff changes in Year 4 and Year 5, but appreciated the reasons for this and felt that their children's progress had not been badly affected. Parents and carers continue to support the school by making sure that pupils have good punctuality and attendance, and this has improved further in the last 12 months.

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

The extended leadership team introduced by the acting headteacher earlier in the year is now established. This comprises the headteacher, deputy headteacher, inclusion leader, the English and mathematics leaders, and the Early Years leader. Together, they are having a powerful impact on the school's improvement because of the clear guidance they provide, and the enthusiastic response of teachers who work hard to implement the changes they recommend. It is welcome that the work of this team has been collaborative. With his appointment to the substantive post, the headteacher is now well placed to give clear vision and direction for the next stage.

When leaders work alongside teachers or observe lessons, they provide accurate and detailed feedback about the strengths and weaknesses seen, and practical guidance about next steps. They ensure that teachers have a good understanding about how well their pupils are "on track" for nationally expected levels of attainment, and that teachers use this knowledge to inform their planning. This is raising teachers' expectations for what their pupils can, and should, achieve.

By looking closely at information about pupils' progress, and by observing teaching and learning, leaders accurately identify strengths and weaknesses in the school.

They meet regularly, discuss relevant solutions to any problems which arise, and put these in place promptly.

The inclusion leader has made effective changes to the way in which the school identifies pupils' special educational needs. As a result, the school's records now show clearly which pupils do require special help with their learning, and those who have simply fallen behind and need to catch up. Better support is being provided to pupils in one-to-one sessions so both of these groups are making better progress. Effective steps are being taken to improve the impact of additional adults in whole-class teaching, although there remains more to do on this issue.

The governing body has received useful training which has started to improve its effectiveness. This has included how to use the information it receives about pupils' progress to judge how well the school is doing compared with the national picture. The safeguarding governor is actively involved in talking with pupils and staff about playtimes. Governors' visits to the school are recorded, although briefly, and discussed in meetings. However, records of meetings do not record fully enough the questions governors ask school leaders, and there is generally still insufficient evidence of governors holding the headteacher to account for the improvement of the school. Governors have developed a schedule to check and measure the school's improvement, although this is separate from the school's improvement plan and should be aligned more closely to it.

### **External support**

There are conspicuous links between the challenge and support provided by the local authority and improvement in the school. This has included training for staff and governors in the analysis and use of pupils' progress information, and wider training and support for leaders and teachers. Local authority consultants have checked and verified the school's assessments of pupils' progress, and supported staff to make sure that these are substantiated by good evidence. The local authority has supported governors in devising a suitable plan to check improvement, and senior leaders to write a concise "raising attainment plan". As a result, leaders, teachers and governors are rightly more sharply focused on pupils' progress as the key indicator of success, and they now know how to analyse this information more intelligently.