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3 July 2014

Kudsia Batool  
Headteacher  
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 with Mike Williams, Additional Inspector, to your school on 1–2 July 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 fifth 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 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 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 fifth monitoring inspection on 1–2 July 2014**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and a representative from the local authority.

### **Context**

Since the last inspection, four class teachers have left the school and a further two will be leaving at the end of the term. In September, there will be seven new teachers working in the school. A deputy headteacher has been permanently appointed and a leader for special educational needs has temporarily joined the senior leadership team. New subject leaders for English and mathematics have been appointed to join the school in September, along with a leader to promote and develop the creative curriculum.

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

Improved teaching is helping pupils to make better progress. Key Stage 2 unvalidated data for 2014 shows results have improved from the previous year in reading, writing and mathematics. Furthermore, it shows that the number of pupils making expected progress is now in line with national expectations.

Current internal data still show a variable picture, but evidence suggests that the school is closing the gap in attainment between pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding (additional funding provided by the government for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after in public care) and their classmates. However, leaders in school acknowledge that progress needs to increase further to ensure that these pupils make up ground from previous underperformance.

Leaders track the progress of all groups. This is helping them to identify which groups are performing well and those which require additional support. Progress in different subjects is also checked. This shows that pupils are making better progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. The school acknowledges more needs to be done to improve pupils' reading skills, and teachers have received training to help them improve the quality of teaching in reading and phonics (the sounds letters make).

Most progress is seen where there is strong teaching. Where teaching is weaker, the progress pupils make slows. Leaders have identified where these weaknesses lie and, in September, there will be significant changes to the teaching staff.

Pupils report that they now enjoy lessons more, and learn more. Most feel that lessons are more challenging and that teachers have higher expectations of what they can achieve.

### **The quality of teaching**

The senior leadership team report that the quality of teaching is improving. This has been the school's priority, and considerable training has been delivered to staff to ensure high-quality teaching which is consistent across the school. Teachers have been supported through a 'team teaching' and coaching model, where senior leaders work alongside teachers to help them improve the quality of their teaching. This is helping teachers to develop strategies to accelerate pupils' learning.

Intervention programmes have been introduced to help improve standards. For example, pupils now have 15-minutes mental maths daily, in addition to their mathematics lesson, and the school has plans to teach phonics to all pupils. Considerable attention has been given to the teaching of writing. Priority has been given to constructing sentences and to pupils' choice of words. This means that pupils often complete exercises to improve writing. However, pupils are not always given enough opportunities to write for extended periods of time. Similarly, much emphasis has been given to the development of pupils' basic understanding in mathematics. As a result, there have not been enough opportunities to apply mathematics to real-life situations.

The marking of pupils' work has improved. It is more consistent across subjects, and most teachers follow the school's guidelines. Teachers praise pupils for good work and give guidance on how to improve. However, pupils do not always listen to their teacher's advice and, as a result, their work does not improve. Although pupils have targets of how to improve in reading, writing and mathematics, pupils say they have little relevance and they are not referred to in lessons.

The presentation of pupils' work varies from subject to subject. In some books seen by the inspectors, presentation was poor and pupils were allowed to write in pencil and crayons, with little attention given to the quality of the writing. This was not identified by the class teachers.

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

Pupils told inspectors that some poor behaviour remains but this did not prevent them from feeling safe. They know who to turn to if a problem arises and are confident that issues will be sorted by class teachers and senior leaders. Pupils report that lessons are sometimes disrupted by pupils' poor behaviour. Furthermore, they said fighting exists on the playground and midday assistants have limited success in dealing with this poor behaviour.

Logs of poor behaviour are maintained by all staff. These are monitored by the senior leadership team on a weekly basis. As a result, senior leaders recognise there are still issues with pupils' behaviour. Senior leaders analyse trends of poor behaviour and provide valuable feedback to teachers. A culture is developing across the school where pupils are taking greater responsibility for their own actions.

Attendance rates are now rigorously monitored by senior leaders, and they have improved. The school has developed effective links with the local authority's Education Welfare Officer to promote good attendance, and links have improved between parents and the school on the importance of regular attendance. Pupils are encouraged to attend school through a range of positive incentives.

The number of pupils who have been excluded by the school for incidents of poor behaviour has recently increased. This is because the school has a zero-tolerance approach to poor behaviour and has high expectations of what is acceptable behaviour in school.

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

The leadership team has been restructured to create a new team with greater accountability and shared responsibilities. For most of the team, there is a greater clarity about what needs to be achieved, along with a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. New appointments have been made for September to crucial roles, such as subject leaders for key areas. A community leader has been appointed onto the senior leadership team, who is developing some interesting initiatives linking into the community's needs.

The headteacher has a passion and determination for the school which is based on improving standards for all pupils. She has effectively tackled weak teaching, which is leading to pupils making better progress. She has been very well supported by the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the local authority. Leaders' monitoring is not only leading to an accurate view of the quality of teaching but is better holding teachers to account for their performance in the classroom.

The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs remains in a state of confusion. The school is still unable to articulate a clear rationale for the identification of pupils with special educational needs and there is no strategic direction or vision for this vital aspect of the school.

The effectiveness of subject leaders has improved. These staff are dedicated and committed to improving their subject areas. They are working well as a team and are beginning to make a difference. Through training, they have a greater awareness of data and are well supported by senior leaders.

The school continues to develop and move forward. Priorities for the new development plan for the next academic year are underway, and staff are currently planning for the delivery of the new National Curriculum in September.

Some important policies are, however, out of date and need reviewing. Furthermore, the school's website is poor because it does not provide some essential information for parents. For example, the evaluation of how the pupil premium funding has been spent is not detailed enough and does not show the difference it has made to some pupils.

Training for staff to ensure that pupils are kept safe is rigorous. Staff have had anti-terrorist training and have been trained in child protection, anti-gang crime, protection against abuse in faith communities, and supporting hard-to-reach families.

The Chair of the Interim Executive Board has been instrumental in bringing about change. His involvement has been invaluable and, through his experience and expertise, he has both supported and challenged the school to improve.

### **External support**

The local authority has provided effective support to enable the school to move forward. It has supported the school financially and, through regular visits and meetings, it has strengthened the leadership of the school.