

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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22 June 2016

Lucy Sumner  
Interim headteacher  
Deborah Ajose  
Executive headteacher  
Godolphin Infant School  
Warrington Avenue  
Slough  
Berkshire  
SL1 3BQ

Dear Ms Sumner and Mrs Ajose

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Godolphin Infant School**

Following my visit with Neil Small and Christine Bulmer, Ofsted Inspectors, to your school on 7–8 June 2016, 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 that 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 that took place in June 2014. The full list of the areas for improvement that 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:

### **Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.**

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Slough. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Anwar

**Senior Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in June 2014.**

- Improve the quality of teaching in order that pupils make good progress by ensuring that:
  - children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have stimulating tasks that help them to make rapid progress in developing their basic skills
  - teachers always challenge pupils to do their best, including those who are more able
  - teachers give pupils enough opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills in all subjects, particularly in Year 2
  - teachers check the learning of all groups of pupils more accurately
  - teachers are held to account for pupils' progress.
  
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - leaders at all levels use an effective system for accurately measuring pupils' learning and progress, and check the progress of different groups of pupils properly
  - accurate checks on what children know and can do when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage are undertaken
  - records of assessments of children's progress in all classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage setting provide clear information about how well children are learning over time
  - checks are undertaken to ensure all employees have the right to work in the United Kingdom
  - leaders with responsibilities for pupils with special educational needs are fully aware of how these pupils are doing and that they receive effective support
  - training and support is provided for staff in the specially resourced provision so they can accurately monitor how well pupils in the unit are doing
  - governors are provided with detailed and accurate information to enable them to fully understand the school's performance and so hold leaders to account.

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

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the fifth monitoring inspection on 7 to 8 June 2016**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a wide range of documents including the school's self-evaluation review and improvement plan, minutes of governors' meetings and safeguarding documentation. The school's single central record of staff vetting checks was scrutinised. Inspectors made visits to all classes, several with senior leaders. Meetings were held with the headteacher and executive headteacher, the chair of the governing body, the head of school improvement for Cambridge Education and leaders and managers in the school. In addition, inspectors talked to pupils informally in classrooms and met with groups of pupils to hear them read. An inspector had conversations with groups of parents in the playground. Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and also reviewed work in pupils' books. Inspectors reviewed the school website, which complies with all requirements.

### **Context**

There have been several changes in the school since the last monitoring inspection. One new teacher has joined the Reception class. Two teachers have left Year 1 and the assistant and deputy headteacher now teach in Year 1. A new substantive headteacher has been appointed and will join the school in September. The Year 1 leader will take on the role of special educational needs coordinator from September and another teacher will take on the leadership of Year 1.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Leaders and governors have responded purposefully to the outcome of the previous inspection. They recognise that this was a 'wake-up call' and have evaluated the school's strengths and areas for development with greater rigour. Leaders' analysis of areas that need to improve is sharper and more accurate. However, their overall judgements are still over-generous at times. Leaders are clearer about the urgency with which improvements must be made and their work is beginning to make a difference.

A new assessment system was swiftly introduced after the last monitoring inspection. While still new, it is being used well by leaders to track pupils' progress more accurately. Progress meetings held with teachers focus more sharply on achievement information, but do not yet take account of how well groups of pupils, for example boys, are doing in each class. As a result, some teachers are not yet using assessment information effectively enough to inform what and how they teach. For example, there is not sufficient evidence of teachers focusing explicitly on supporting boys despite their significant underperformance compared to girls.

While safeguarding procedures meet requirements, the paperwork supporting the school's work in this area is not adequate. Several documents are not sufficiently detailed or up to date in terms of actions taken by the school. Leaders recognise the need to address this urgently and are taking appropriate action.

Governors now attend the strategy action group meetings with senior leaders and school improvement officers and, as a result, are better and more accurately informed about standards in the school. Minutes from these meetings show that governors are asking better questions and challenging senior leaders more robustly. Nevertheless, governors do not appear sufficiently familiar with the priorities for improvement and do not check the impact of initiatives with enough rigour. It is disappointing that only the chair of the governing body was available to meet with inspectors during this inspection. An external review of governance, recommended at the inspection in June 2014, has not yet taken place due to significant changes in the membership of the governing body.

The leadership of the school's specialist provision for pupils with severe special educational needs and disability, 'The Launchpad', has not improved and remains ineffective. Senior leaders recognise the urgent need to improve this provision and have appropriate plans in place to do so. More generally, individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs and disability do not show precisely enough how pupils will be supported to learn and meet their targets.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Staff training is becoming more focused because it is better informed by assessment information. Leaders are now aware that some teachers need more support in understanding exactly how to implement new initiatives. As staffing becomes more stable, the impact of training is evident, particularly in Year 2 where inspectors saw some real strengths in the teaching of mathematics. In addition, teaching is more consistent across Reception classes.

However, standards of teaching remain particularly weak in Year 1. Typically, teachers do not offer enough appropriate challenge to the most able pupils. Pupils' books show that teachers' feedback to pupils is improving progress in some classes, but this is not consistent.

Nevertheless, the school's focus on improving pupils' extended writing is starting to have a positive impact. Inspectors saw several good examples of pupils' fluent and imaginative writing in Year 2, and some age-appropriate writing in the early years. Outdoor provision for children in the early years is much improved and teachers and assistants are becoming more adept at identifying opportunities to extend children's learning.

Teaching in 'The Launchpad' is not adequately focused on matching the learning needs of the individual pupils in this provision. Activities are not well enough adapted to children's needs to ensure that children make the progress they should. Relationships between the children and their appointed adults are warm. However, the classroom environment is not sufficiently inviting and resources are not always suitable, especially for children in the early years.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

Pupils are generally polite and welcoming around the school. They are interested in and talkative with visitors. Pupils get on well together at playtime, and have a good awareness of how to sort out any difficulties with their peers. They feel well looked after. The school has used assemblies with older pupils to develop their understanding of how to keep safe out of school. Despite this work, pupils are still not able to talk confidently about how to keep safe.

Leaders have accurately identified that low-level disruption is an issue in classes. This is particularly the case for boys, and when teaching is not pitched at the right level. The school has an appropriate system for managing behaviour, but it is not always used convincingly by staff.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

The school's new assessment system is now enabling leaders to track pupils' and groups of pupils' achievement more effectively.

School initiatives such as curriculum changes and different topic reading books have not had sufficient impact on closing the achievement gap between boys and girls, particularly in Year 1 and the Reception class. The school's information shows that boys are not doing well enough in the early years or in Year 1. In Year 2, boys have made improved progress because of better teaching and more stable staffing. Very recent test results indicate that pupils in Year 2 overall made stronger progress than in previous years, given low starting points.

Pupils with special educational needs and disability do not make enough progress.

Pupils' reading and writing is improving. Inspectors listened to pupils read, several very fluently, from books appropriate to their age. Pupils' workbooks showed increasingly rapid progress in writing. Teachers have received useful subject specialist support in mathematics from colleagues at Baylis Court School. This is starting to have an impact on pupils' skills and learning in mathematics.

### **External support**

Since the last inspection, the strategy action group, chaired by the local authority, has become more rigorous in challenging senior leaders. Governors now attend

these meetings and, as a result, are asking more searching questions. The local authority adviser is robust in her evaluation of standards and, usefully for leaders, pulls no punches in her reports to the school. Despite this, recommended actions are not always carried out by leaders, limiting the impact of her work.

Baylis Court School, the lead school in the academy trust, has further extended its support for Godolphin. A senior leader for professional development now manages this area with a determined and thoughtful approach that is already having an impact on teaching. In addition, Baylis Court will imminently provide leadership support for safeguarding.