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22 November 2017

Ms Cathy Godden  
Headteacher  
Orchard Meadow Primary School  
Wesley Close  
Oxford  
Oxfordshire  
OX4 6BG

Dear Ms Godden

**Special measures monitoring inspection of Orchard Meadow Primary School**

Following my visit with Robert Howell, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 8 and 9 November 2017, 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 second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in October 2016. 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.

The school's action plan is fit for purpose.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that the school may appoint one newly qualified teacher.

I am copying this letter to the interim executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Oxfordshire. This letter will

be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dom Cook  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in October 2016**

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment, especially in Years 1 to 3, by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of the standards pupils can achieve, making effective use of assessment to set tasks that challenge pupils to make good progress from different starting points
  - stretching the most able pupils so that more exceed expectations for their age
  - ensuring that teachers' feedback helps pupils to understand how to improve their work
  - training and using teaching assistants effectively so that they have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Improve behaviour, welfare and personal development by:
  - using a consistent and effective approach to promoting good behaviour and self-discipline
  - ensuring that pupils attend school regularly, in particular reducing significantly the proportion of pupils that miss school frequently, especially disadvantaged pupils, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - keeping the impact of the nurture provision on improving the behaviour and well-being of targeted pupils under review
  - providing pupils with rich and varied opportunities that effectively promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- Improve pupils' achievement by:
  - setting targets that significantly raise everybody's expectations of the progress pupils can and should make
  - reviewing how effectively reading, including phonics, is taught
  - ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop and apply their thinking and problem-solving and writing skills.
- Improve leadership at all levels by:
  - monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' learning more rigorously and providing focused feedback, support and challenge to teachers
  - analysing outcomes for different groups of pupils, tracking their progress and taking prompt action to support those who are falling behind, particularly pupils who are disadvantaged and the most able
  - developing the role of subject leaders to identify priorities and lead improvements
  - providing a rich, relevant, broad and balanced curriculum.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 8 and 9 November 2017**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work. They met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and subject leaders, representatives of the trust, and members of the interim executive board. The lead inspector spoke with the school's external school improvement consultant on the telephone. A range of documents was scrutinised, including information about pupils' progress, the school's improvement plans, records of behaviour and attendance, and the school's record of checks on staff.

### **Context**

Three new teachers and an assistant headteacher have been appointed and taken up post since the last special measures monitoring visit in May 2017.

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

Leaders continue to demonstrate strong ambition to improve outcomes for pupils at Orchard Meadow. The headteacher, with growing support from an increasingly effective team of senior and middle leaders, ensures that the pace of school improvement has been sustained. Leaders were tenacious in recruiting new staff members in the summer term. Importantly, they showed clear commitment to recruiting staff capable of and willing to contribute to essential improvements in teaching and learning. Appropriate induction and performance management for new teachers ensure that staff are aware of their individual responsibilities to making Orchard Meadow a successful school.

Leaders are becoming increasingly more effective in analysing outcomes for different groups of pupils. Assessment procedures have been refined further and are supporting teachers to make more accurate judgements of pupils' progress and attainment. Leaders use this information to identify pupils who are falling behind or who are not making enough progress. Appropriately, leaders are beginning to hold teachers more stringently to account for pupils' progress and outcomes. Leaders know that teachers must now become more adept at using this progress information to tailor their teaching more successfully to pupils' individual needs.

Subject leaders are beginning to have a greater impact in developing the school's curriculum. They show considerable enthusiasm, but more importantly a growing ability to lead their subjects with greater effectiveness. They are monitoring more carefully how well the wider curriculum is being taught, and demonstrating a stronger capability to review the progress different groups of pupils make. Leaders' work to identify most-able pupils has been completed, and initial training to adapt teaching to the needs of this group has been undertaken by staff. However, leaders must now ensure that learning, particularly in English and mathematics, is suitably challenging to ensure that pupils can make rapid progress from their starting points.

Leaders remain committed to improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Essentially, the recently appointed 'pupil premium lead teacher' is monitoring closely the achievements of this group of pupils. She is currently working in unison with the school's special educational needs coordinator to better understand which disadvantaged pupils may require additional support for their learning needs. This work is helping refine provision to ensure that extra help is more closely matched to disadvantaged pupils' individual needs.

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

Successful recruitment has ensured that all teaching posts are now filled, and important professional development to help teachers improve their practice is well underway. Appropriate training is developing teachers' core skills and deepening their ability to make learning more challenging. Where teaching is at its best, learning activities are adapted suitably to pupils' needs, and provide effective opportunities to practise new skills. However, despite improvements, the quality of teaching across the school remains inconsistent, and more needs to be achieved to improve provision further.

Teaching is increasingly reflecting higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers are demanding more of pupils in lessons, and are starting to help them become better learners. Importantly, the work pupils produce in their exercise books shows they are beginning to respond positively to these higher demands. Increasingly, pupils' work is of an improved standard and reflects a growing pride in their learning.

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

There has been a marked improvement in pupils' behaviour, both in class and at play. Staff now consistently uphold the school's behaviour policy and ensure that any poor discipline is dealt with fairly and appropriately. Leaders ensure that any poor behaviour incidents are recorded accurately, and they monitor and evaluate this information to identify any times or situations where pupils' behaviour might slip. Pupils are becoming increasingly self-disciplined and the school is noticeably calmer as a result.

Leaders continue to promote the importance of good attendance. They consistently apply the school's strategy to ensure that pupils do not miss too much school. Rates of attendance remain similar to the national average; however, leaders remain committed to seeing this rise further.

Exciting events, such as recent Eid and Diwali celebrations, have enthused pupils and deepened their cultural understanding. Pupils are also developing their awareness of fundamental British values and the common links with their own school values of 'respect, perseverance and belonging'. Leaders have also recently provided a multi-faith prayer space for pupils to worship in. This centrally located

space is well used and provides a positive environment for pupils of all religions to pray. The school's work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is gaining pace.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

Pupils' outcomes are showing early signs of improvement. For instance, the proportion of children achieving the expected standard at the end of the Reception Year has risen consistently, and is now above the national average. The progress made by pupils leaving key stage 2 last year was also broadly average; however, too few achieved the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils' achievement in writing shows signs of improvement. For example, work in their exercise books demonstrates that pupils now have more frequent opportunities to write at length. Inspectors also saw evidence of higher-quality children's books being used to excite and inspire pupils' writing. A growing number of pupils are beginning to write better, though more still needs to be achieved to secure good outcomes for pupils in English.

### **External support**

The trust and interim executive board continue to support rapid school improvement. Usefully, they have reviewed how they monitor standards in school, and have adapted how they work to improve their effectiveness. Their members visit school regularly, meet with leaders, and review pupils' learning appropriately. They use the information they gather more effectively, and are beginning to challenge more pertinently school leaders' impact on improving pupils' outcomes.

Governors are becomingly increasingly more adept at measuring the impact of leaders' work by analysing pupils' progress information. They are more confident in evaluating pupils' progress by using the school's assessment tracking tool. However, governors need to refine these skills further to better understand the progress being made by different groups of pupils in a range of subjects.