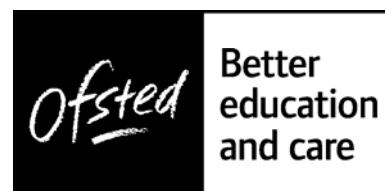


Cambridge Education  
Demeter House  
Station road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

T 01223 578500  
F 01223 578501  
Inspections\_1@camb-ed.com

Ofsted helpline  
0845 640 4045



29 November 2005

Mrs L M Chappell  
Headteacher  
The Gedney Hill CE Primary School  
North Road  
Gedney Hill  
Spalding  
Lincolnshire  
PE12 0NL

Dear Mrs Chappell

## **SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF GEDNEY HILL CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Introduction**

Following my visit to your school on 9 and 10 November 2005, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in November 2004.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed five lessons, the programme of enrichment activities, registration and assembly time, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, teachers, some subject co-ordinators, the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring visit in June 2005 there have been a number of changes at the school. The seconded deputy headteacher and another teacher have left and have been replaced by two teachers, one of whom is part-time. The headteacher

now teaches a class for the equivalent of two days each week. There are now three classes rather than four. A new caretaker and a school secretary, who is also clerk to the governors, have recently been appointed.

### **Achievement and standards**

Results in the national tests taken at the end of Year 6 were similar to those in 2004 and remain in line with the national average. A larger proportion of pupils achieved the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics but fewer achieved the higher Level 5. In science, a larger proportion achieved the higher Level 5 but fewer achieved the expected Level 4. The average points per pupil in science improved significantly while those in mathematics fell. The average points per pupil in English remained at the 2004 level. Pupils generally made progress in line with expectations between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

In the national tests taken at the end of Year 2, results improved in writing and mathematics but fell in reading. Overall, standards were slightly higher than in 2004 but they remain below the national average. No pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in any subject but a greater proportion achieved the expected Level 2 in mathematics.

In lessons, standards in English were below national expectations for pupils' ages overall although good progress had clearly been made in some year groups. Pupils' reading was generally accurate for their age but lacked fluency. Their ability to make inference from what they read was limited and relied too much on teachers' prompting. Pupils' presentation of writing was generally good. Pupils speak with increasing confidence in class but rarely made extended contributions. Weaknesses in some pupils' ability to manage numbers and understand place value limited progress in mathematics. The school has accurately identified these areas of weakness through the regular programme of assessment. Additional support for particular pupils is provided in class and through a range of groups before and after school.

The school's system for the regular assessment of extended writing provides good information on pupils' progress towards their target levels. This information has been used effectively to identify key areas of learning to be included in teachers' planning and specific pupils who require additional support.

In lessons, pupils made satisfactory progress overall but in each class some were making good progress. Pupils' progress in some lessons was affected by gaps and weaknesses in their knowledge and understanding which must be addressed before they can make the rate of progress necessary to reach the standards expected of them. Pupils with special educational needs benefited from targeted support and made satisfactory progress.

Foundation subjects are now appropriately included in the school's long-term curriculum plans and teaching programmes have been developed for art, geography, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education. These subjects will be assessed formally in December to provide information on pupils' progress as a basis for more detailed planning.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in November 2004:

- improve pupils' achievement in Years 1 to 4, particularly in English, mathematics and science and in information and communication technology (ICT), art, physical and religious education, and geography across the school – satisfactory progress.

### **Personal development and well-being**

The pupils' attitudes to learning are usually positive and have improved since the last monitoring visit. Pupils are attentive and respond well to instructions. They concentrate well and try hard even when they find the work difficult. They are enthusiastic when given opportunities to learn by applying their knowledge. They participate willingly in answering questions in class although few sustain detailed contributions. When expected to work in pairs or small groups, they do so without fuss and co-operate effectively. Teachers are working hard to improve pupils' confidence and ability to take responsibility for their learning.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. This has improved since the last visit when some pupils did not follow instructions promptly. Teachers use rewards and praise effectively and pupils respond positively to high expectations. The school is calm and orderly. Attendance is in line with the national average and there have been very few exclusions so far this year.

Planning for personal, social and health education has been completed and teachers encourage pupils to understand the choices available to them and to make appropriate decisions in their social behaviour and learning. There are good examples of the youngest children being given opportunities to negotiate with each other and reach agreement on how best to work together.

The new programme of enrichment activities on Wednesday afternoon promotes pupils' awareness of healthy and safe practices and provides them with good opportunities to develop their creative and sporting skills. The mixed age groups introduce different social expectations and widen the range of interactions for both younger and older pupils. It also enables pupils to work with a different range of adults in a broader set of activities.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in November 2004:

- improve the provision for pupils' personal development and raise the standard of behaviour – good progress.

## Quality of provision

The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall with some good features. There were no unsatisfactory lessons and this is an improvement since the last visit. The school's own evaluation of teaching matches this judgement and correctly identifies the priority to increase the amount of teaching which is at least good.

The better features of lessons were good planning for activities based on clear objectives and well-matched to pupils' levels of attainment and learning needs. Teaching assistants were deployed effectively to work with particular pupils or to lead groups in a learning activity. There were good relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils themselves. Behaviour was good. Pupils responded enthusiastically when given opportunities to learn by applying their knowledge and understanding.

In some lessons, teaching needed greater pace especially for higher attaining pupils. Learning objectives should be referred to as lessons develop to encourage pupils to assess their own progress. Teachers should ensure that their introduction, explanation and modelling of learning relates to all pupils in the mixed age and ability class.

Teachers have benefited from regular and well-planned training and the opportunity to work collaboratively in planning lessons and programmes of study. Teachers have used the training on assessing pupils' work effectively. The system for regular assessment of extended writing is good and has helped them to identify areas of pupils' learning which need further concentration and more practice. The school has good information about pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics which is used to track their progress. Appropriate intensive support is available to pupils identified as falling behind their expected rate of progress.

There has been improvement in the long-term planning of the curriculum and all National Curriculum subjects are now appropriately covered. However, in the light of the changes to the teaching staff in September, it has not been possible to undertake the intended review of opportunities for teaching literacy, numeracy and ICT through other subjects. It is important that this activity take place once the new subject co-ordinators are established in their roles. In addition, the new ICT equipment has worked erratically, affecting teachers' ability to carry out their plans.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in November 2004:

- improve the use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to support learning in other subjects – inadequate progress
- improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 1 to 4 – satisfactory progress.

## Leadership and management

The headteacher provides sound leadership in a changing context. Staff share her vision for the school and there is increasingly effective teamwork, especially in planning units of work. Teachers use the established systems for assessing pupils' work effectively to inform their planning and to focus on raising attainment.

The headteacher has sensibly concentrated on setting clear guidelines and expectations for the new class organisation and new teachers at the beginning of this year. This has meant that some planned activities have had to be postponed but has also encouraged teachers to work together. There has been good progress in the co-ordination of some subjects such as physical education but the responsibility for other subjects has passed to new teachers who have only recently received training. The support provided through the local network of schools should enable subject co-ordinators to learn from the practice in other schools and to share experience.

The evaluation of the school's progress by the headteacher is increasingly evaluative and uses available data wherever possible. It has improved since the last visit. The headteacher is monitoring planning and observing teaching as well as reviewing assessment information. Feedback is given to teachers, although this should be more specific to ensure that teachers know exactly what to improve and how to do so.

The work of the governing body is improving. Governors have reviewed and ratified a number of policies and others are under scrutiny. The school's progress has been discussed in detail at meetings led by the school improvement adviser. Governors have made some visits to the school to monitor progress but these should be formally scheduled and the outcomes presented to governors in relation to the criteria for success outlined in the action plan. Key governors have undertaken appropriate training and the local authority has provided detailed support to the clerk.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in November 2004:

- improve the leadership, management and governance of the school – satisfactory progress
- to meet statutory requirements, implement the cycle of performance management; ensure attendance registers are marked properly and attendance rates included in the information for parents; ensure that all the required subjects of the curriculum are taught and in enough depth – good progress.

## **External support**

The support provided by the local authority has matched that intended in the action plan. The support and training provided in the core subjects and for some foundation subjects has been effective and has helped teachers to develop units of work and improve assessment. The school improvement adviser has assisted the headteacher effectively with the monitoring and evaluation of progress. This has enabled the headteacher to be more evaluative and to prioritise actions accurately. The school improvement adviser has guided and advised governors and provided detailed briefing on the school's progress.

## **Main Judgements**

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory.

## **Priorities for further improvement**

The priorities remain those identified in the inspection of November 2004. Within this, particular emphasis should be given to:

- ensuring that literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are included in the planning of teaching and learning in other subjects
- improving the proportion of teaching that is at least good to ensure that pupils make good progress
- ensuring, with the local authority, that ICT equipment and software works reliably and supports learning at an appropriate standard.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Director of Education for Lincolnshire and the Diocese of Lincoln.

Yours sincerely

**Martin Cragg**  
**H M Inspector**