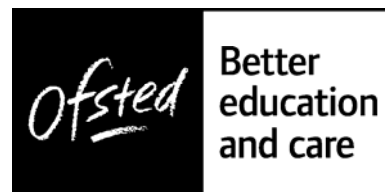


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Mr K McCabe  
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15 December 2005

Dear Mr McCabe

## **SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF ADDERLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Introduction**

Following my visit with John Collings, additional inspector, to your school on 23 and 24 November 2005, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

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

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, and met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and acting deputy headteacher, the assessment coordinator, the lead teacher for English as an additional language, a group of Year 6 pupils, the chair and vice chair of governors, and two representatives from the local authority (LA).

### **Context**

Since the previous monitoring visit the acting headteacher has left the school. The substantive headteacher took up his post at the start of this term.

## **Achievement and standards**

Standards remain below those which are found in many primary schools. At Key Stage 1 the results in the national tests in 2005 for reading and writing were similar to the previous two years. Results in mathematics showed a slight improvement. At Key Stage 2 the results for science and mathematics in 2005 remained broadly similar to the last two years. The school's results for English, however, showed a marked improvement compared to previous years. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in English was in line with the national average. More girls than boys gained a Level 5. In science and mathematics very few pupils gained Level 5.

The progress which pupils make between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2 is improving steadily. The Year 6 pupils in 2005 had made particularly good progress in English since the end of Year 2. They made satisfactory progress in mathematics but not in science. Children in the Foundation Stage make at least satisfactory and often good progress. Progress between the end of the Foundation Stage and the end of Key Stage 1 is less secure.

Progress in the lessons observed during the monitoring inspection was variable and was almost always directly related to the quality of the input from the teachers and the teaching assistants. Where the learning activities were well designed to move the pupils from the current stage in their learning to the next the pupils made good progress. The improved provision for the pupils who are learning English as an additional language and those who have learning difficulties and disabilities is an important step forward in improving progress and raising standards, although these actions are too new to have had any discernible impact.

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

- raise standards throughout the school for all pupils, especially boys, higher attainers and pupils with English as an additional language—satisfactory progress.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good overall. In the vast majority of lessons pupils behaved well, paid attention and were involved in learning. Pupils answered well when asked questions, were polite, and responded appropriately to teachers and other adults. Attendance, although still below the national average, has improved over the last three years. This pattern is continuing. The figure for the autumn term, when adjusted for Eid, was 93.9%. The school has good procedures to address this issue.

In discussion with inspectors, pupils demonstrated positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy school and want to come. They were aware not only of

their own literacy and numeracy targets but also the class targets. They felt very secure to go to members of staff or the new headteacher to discuss problems and issues they may have. They feel the school has improved and is a safer place than it was. They were able to identify how they learn best, for example, a quiet, relaxed and positive learning environment where explanations are clear and concise. The school is emphasising the importance of healthy eating through the science curriculum and personal, social and health education.

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

- improve pupils' attendance—good progress.

### **Quality of provision**

Teaching is satisfactory overall. The vast majority of lessons were well planned, systematic and firmly based on national strategies, but suitably modified to meet pupils' needs. In the good lessons there were high expectations of pupils. There was a strong focus on their progress, identifying clearly what pupils needed to learn over a term, lesson and parts of a lesson. Where teaching was strong teachers had a very clear view of what needed to be taught and it was firmly based on pupils' prior attainment. Good lessons were well structured, had good pace, and pupils were given ample opportunities to apply and consolidate what they were learning. This was exemplified where pupils had frequent opportunities to review and discuss ideas and concepts in small discussion groups or pairs. In good lessons teachers' language was clear, well structured and delivered in a calm purposeful atmosphere where pupils understood what was expected of them.

Where teaching was less effective planning followed the school's procedures but was not sufficiently modified to meet pupils' needs. The headteacher's observations suggest that sometimes this is an issue of teachers' confidence. Pupils were often, for example, expected to listen for too long and lost interest and concentration. They were given insufficient opportunities to apply and consolidate their learning before new ideas or instructions were presented. Consequently opportunities for teachers to continually assess learning and modify their teaching to ensure learners were challenged appropriately were lost. In less successful lessons teachers often spoke too loudly and this in turn inadvertently encouraged pupils to raise their voices. In the resulting noisy classrooms pupils and teachers did not hear clearly what each was saying. This particularly slowed the progress of those pupils for whom English is an additional language because they were not hearing effective models of spoken English which they could emulate.

The leadership team and the assessment coordinator are working hard to help staff improve their understanding of assessment. Some progress has been made. Some staff are clear about the levels at which pupils are working and use this well to plan their lessons. Sometimes, however, expectations about the pupils' capabilities are too low. The planned discussions between

the local authority consultant, a member of the senior, and each teacher about the progress of their class, are a sensible step towards improving this situation. The new systems for tracking the pupils' progress and for identifying quickly any underachievement are at an early stage of development but are well designed and well understood by the assessment leader.

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

- make sure teachers are clear about what pupils can understand and use this knowledge consistently to plan and manage lessons at the right level for learning –satisfactory progress.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has effectively assessed the school's strengths and weaknesses. He has used his own expertise, the school's previous self-evaluation and the leadership team's knowledge of the school, to help him determine the next priorities. He has quickly realised that, although there has been good progress on most of the key areas for improvement which were identified in the September 2004 inspection, there remain issues with some aspects of teaching and with the pupils' progress. Frank discussions with staff have involved the headteacher communicating his expectations clearly. Most staff have responded well to this new direction. The new staffing structure which is intended to begin early next term sensibly addresses the current lack of leadership for different age groups in the school. New appointments have been made to replace the staff who are leaving at the end of this term. Importantly, the headteacher observed the candidates teaching in their current schools to determine their suitability.

The headteacher has already established good relationships with parents and pupils. Pupils spoke warmly of his presence around the school. Literacy, numeracy, and test preparation workshops are continuing for parents on a regular basis. These have been reasonably well attended, particularly by the parents of the Reception children, and evaluations are positive. A successful autumn fair run by the school provided a good opportunity to make further links with the community. The regular newsletter is informative and relevant.

The deputy headteacher and acting deputy headteacher continue to work hard to improve the school. They have taken clear leadership of special educational needs provision and of English as an additional language, neither of which were sufficiently effective. With the support of the LA the school has reviewed thoroughly the provision which it makes for pupils who are learning English as an additional language and has begun to make some significant improvements to this area of its work. Appropriate training has begun for all staff. The management of special educational needs provision by the acting deputy headteacher is also much improved. She has quickly remedied many of the weaknesses and greatly improved systems and structures are now in place. These senior leaders have a very good understanding of the need to

focus on the progress of these groups of pupils and they are well supported by other key members of staff.

A small group of governors has held a second meeting with parents to discuss developments in the school. A new vice chair has been appointed and is already taking an active role. The governing body is well informed about many aspects of the school and the chair, in particular, provides a good level of support to the headteacher. Governors are now well placed to become more involved in providing challenge and support to the school as it seeks to raise standards.

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

- ensure that the school fully understands the issues causing continuing complaints from some parents. Complaints should be dealt with in an agreed and consistent way to maintain the confidence of all involved—good progress
- ensure governors fully understand their roles and responsibilities—good progress.

### **External support**

The very good support which is provided by the consultant for the Intensifying Support Programme continues to be highly effective and greatly valued by the school. He has a clear understanding of the next steps which the school needs to take, particularly with regard to their use of data and the tracking of pupils' progress. The support which the LA is providing to develop provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities, and for learners of English as an additional language is much needed and is beginning to have an impact. The LA's regular review meetings are thorough and demonstrate that key personnel have a good understanding of the school's needs.

### **Main Judgements**

Progress since being subject to special measures—good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection—good.

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Develop staff's knowledge and understanding of pupils' current levels of attainment, and the next steps the pupils need to take in their learning, in order to ensure that each lesson is pitched at the right level to accelerate progress
- continue to improve provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities and for those learning English as an additional language.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Strategic Director of Learning and Culture for Birmingham.

Yours sincerely

Sue Morris-King  
**H M Inspector**