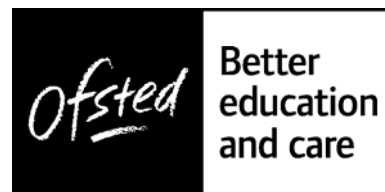


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28 November 2005

Mrs E Stead  
Measham CE Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Stead

## **SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF MEASHAM CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Introduction**

Following my visit with Hazel Callaghan, additional inspector, to your school on 15 and 16 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 senior leadership team, a number of coordinators, a group of pupils, a representative of the governors and a representative from the local authority (LA).

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring visit the chair of governors has resigned and a new appointment is to be confirmed at the next governing body meeting in November. Three new governors have been appointed including one from the LA.

## **Achievement and standards**

Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills well below those normally expected. They make good progress. Improvements in provision ensure that children gain the basic skills, such as recognising letters and counting. There is a strong emphasis on developing personal skills. Children are well prepared for learning and their progress is effectively monitored.

At Key Stage 1 standards are below average. Pupils perform less well in writing than they do in reading and mathematics. Better teaching in the mixed Year 1/2 classes has enabled pupils to make faster progress in lessons. However, gaps in the learning of some Year 2 pupils remain due to the residual underachievement arising from previously inadequate teaching. At Key Stage 2 standards are well below average. Provisional results for the 2005 national tests show an overall decline in standards compared to 2004. In mathematics the proportion of 11 year olds reaching the expected Level 4 fell to less than half and represented the lowest attainment for four years. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 in English and in science was also well below average.

Pupils make unsatisfactory progress overall in Key Stage 2 because not enough of the teaching is good. Where the teaching is good pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their lessons. However, consistently good teaching is not found in all classes. Consequently the rate at which pupils progress is uneven throughout the school. Pupils make the best progress in the mixed Foundation Stage/Year 1 classes. In the mixed Year 3/4 classes they make at best satisfactory and often inadequate progress. Overall the progress pupils make is insufficient to raise standards rapidly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) were not assessed on this monitoring visit.

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

- to raise standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 6 – inadequate progress.

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

Provision for the pupils' personal development and well-being is satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage. Children settle well and consequently are able to make good progress in their learning. The school has become a much calmer environment in which to learn and this has had a positive impact on the pupils' concentration in lessons. Behaviour in most lessons was satisfactory and was good in around a quarter. The rate of exclusion has declined since the last monitoring visit. Where behaviour is unsatisfactory, teachers do not set clear expectations and are inconsistent in their use of

sanctions and rewards. Attitudes to learning are positive where good teaching stimulates the pupils' interest; most of them try hard and want to do well.

The new system of mixing pupils of all ages into 'family groups' at lunchtime is having a positive impact on behaviour around the school. Older pupils are responding well to opportunities to take responsibility for the care of younger children. Pupils say they feel proud to represent their class on the school council and take seriously the responsibility this brings. Pupils say they feel safe and are confident that they can talk to an adult if they have a problem. New perimeter fencing has made the school site more secure.

The school has improved its systems for monitoring unauthorised absence and works closely with the education welfare officer to impress on parents the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. However, at 93% attendance remains well below average.

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

- to improve the attitudes and behaviour of pupils throughout the school – good progress.

### **Quality of provision**

Teaching was good in four lessons, satisfactory in nine, and inadequate in four. The quality of teaching has improved since the last monitoring visit, although too much remains unsatisfactory and not enough is good. In the best lessons clearly understood classroom routines were well established, lesson objectives were shared with the pupils in a way they understood, assessment information was used well to plan activities that met the needs of all the pupils, a range of activities captured and sustained their interest, and opportunities to work with others contributed to their language and social development. In some of the satisfactory lessons whole group activities did not challenge the more capable pupils and the less capable found it difficult to engage with the work. The use of questioning and other forms of assessment were not always used consistently well to check that learning had taken place. In some lessons quieter pupils were allowed to be passive rather than active participants in their learning. Some teachers did not use lesson outcomes to measure the success of the lesson or to inform future planning. In the inadequate lessons the pace was too slow, tasks were dull and provided too little challenge, and ineffective management of behaviour resulted in the pupils making inadequate progress. The ICT suite is adequately resourced although the use of ICT to support learning across the wider curriculum is underdeveloped.

A rigorous lesson observation programme has been used with some success to challenge unsatisfactory performance and to improve the overall quality of teaching. However, the proportion of good teaching is too low to raise standards rapidly. Considerable work has been done on the use of

assessment information. The school has a more reliable view of standards in the core subjects and of the progress pupils make towards their targets. Assessment information is not used consistently well by all teachers to plan lessons which meet the needs of all the pupils. There is some evidence in the pupils' books of marking which helps them to improve their work further. This is not the case for all groups or subjects. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory. The school has admitted eight pupils who speak English as an additional language. This is a new experience for the school and support systems for these pupils are at an early stage of development.

The curriculum is sufficiently broad. Planning of subject delivery ensures that pupils in the mixed age classes have equal opportunities for learning. Additional activities such as the use of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum and promote the pupils' personal development.

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

- to improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school – satisfactory progress
- to improve the organisation and management of the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils – satisfactory progress.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher provides a clear strategic direction to the school's improvement work. Her persistence in tackling unsatisfactory performance has led to some staffing changes since the last monitoring visit. New appointments are planned for January 2006. The headteacher's evaluation of the school's progress in implementing its development plan shows she has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Considerable changes to staffing have been a feature of the school since the inspection of September 2004. Consequently it has not been possible to establish a stable platform from which to build improvement incrementally. This has slowed the rate of progress.

The senior management team has demonstrated the capacity to secure improvement in some areas of the school's work, for example, in improving behaviour in lessons and around the school. Work on improving the quality of teaching has had some effect, although there is still some way to go. It is too soon to gauge the impact of work intended to raise standards in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Leadership and management of key areas of the school's work below the level of the senior team are less secure and are unsatisfactory overall. A lack of clarity around the management of science is slowing the pace of work to raise standards. Following a period of inertia the pace of development in literacy has accelerated, although it is too soon to assess the impact of recent work on raising standards in writing and reading. However, the school does have a

more accurate view of standards in writing and reading than it did on the last monitoring visit. A numeracy coordinator has been appointed to join the school from January 2006, releasing the headteacher from this additional responsibility.

A programme of building work over the summer has considerably improved the quality of accommodation. The former open plan style has been replaced by separate classrooms. This has contributed significantly to better behaviour and improved concentration in lessons. The school is a calmer and more orderly place than it was during the previous monitoring visit.

New appointments have invigorated and strengthened the governing body. New systems for checking the school's work are at an early stage of development and it is too soon to gauge the impact of the new arrangements for governance on the work of the school.

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

- to establish an effective management team – satisfactory progress.

### **External support**

The level of support provided by the LA has improved since the last monitoring visit. The LA now supports the school well. The school has benefited from the appointment of an additional governor, the work of the link officer, the education officer, a range of consultants and advisors, and training for all staff and governors.

### **Main Judgements**

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory.

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed subject to the following qualifications: no more than two to be appointed without prior discussion with lead monitoring inspector.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Strengthen the management of the school below the level of the senior leadership team
- ensure that assessment information is used by all teachers to plan lessons which meet the needs of all the pupils
- improve the proportion of teaching that is good, particularly at the lower end of Key Stage 2
- raise standards in core subjects and particularly in mathematics and writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Cathy Kirby  
**H M Inspector**