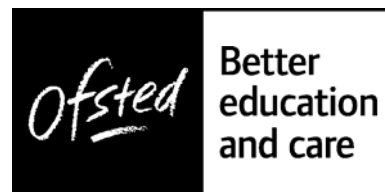


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Mrs S Lloyd  
The Headteacher  
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SN15 4RP

14 July 2006

Dear Mrs Lloyd

## **SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF SUTTON BENGER C OF E AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Introduction**

Following my visit to your school on 28 and 29 June 2006, 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 June 2005.

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**

I observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, and met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the numeracy subject leader, representatives from the governing body, and a representative from the local authority (LA). I observed six lessons or part lessons and a morning break and held informal discussions with other members of staff and pupils. Using this evidence I made the following observations to the headteacher, representatives of the governing body and a representative from the LA.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection in February 2006, two teachers left the school in March 2006. One permanent replacement has been appointed who is also the deputy headteacher with responsibilities for literacy, special

educational needs and assessment. The Foundation Stage, Class One, is currently taught by temporary teachers and will be taught by an experienced teacher from September 2006. Permanent teachers for classes two and three have been appointed for September 2006. The delegated powers, removed from the governing body following the inspection in June 2005, have been reinstated. The forecast number on roll for September 2006 is 147, a slight increase over the September 2005 figure.

### **Achievement and standards**

Initial analysis of the 2006 Key Stage 2 national test results shows improvement in standards, compared to 2005, in mathematics and science. In English the proportion of the year groups gaining Level 4 or above is lower than in 2005 although a greater proportion achieved Level 5. Standards at Key Stage 1 are beginning to rise as a result of improvements in the quality of teaching. Early analysis of the 2006 Key Stage 1 national test results shows improvements in writing, mathematics and speaking and listening as the proportion of the year group gaining Level 3 has increased compared to 2005. This indicates that the decline in writing in Key Stage 1 experienced over the last four years has been halted.

Standards in the Foundation stage are good and many children make good progress. Although pupils are beginning to make better progress in Key Stage 1, the rate of progress lacks the acceleration needed to raise standards further.

Standards of writing throughout the school are still not high enough. The school is implementing a number of strategies to tackle this issue and these are starting to improve the quality of the pupils' written work. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils made significant improvements to some simple sentences. They applied a systematic approach involving making changes to the start of the sentences, improving vocabulary and punctuation and the use of simple connectives such as 'but' and 'and'.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in June 2005

- raise standards for seven year olds by improving teaching and learning in the infants – satisfactory.

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

Pupils in the main enjoy their lessons. They are well behaved both in lessons and when playing outdoors where they are well supervised. The school council was able to make a presentation to the governing body on aspects of its work and answer questions from governors. The school has also collected pupil views on aspects of school life through a questionnaire.

## Quality of provision

The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory, an improvement since the last monitoring inspection. Much of the teaching observed was good and no inadequate teaching was seen. Good features seen in all lessons included planning for groups of different abilities and the use of clear learning objectives. In good lessons, teachers challenged all pupils to work at the very limit of their ability. They assessed pupils' progress during the lesson and adjusted their plans to enable all pupils to succeed. Pupils of different abilities carried out a variety of activities and were encouraged to solve problems and work independently, both individually and in groups. For example, in a good mathematics lesson with Year 5 and 6, groups of pupils of similar ability applied their knowledge and skills to solve a practical problem. Each group also had some more challenging tasks and lower attaining pupils were well supported by a teaching assistant. The teacher's checking of work in the classroom enabled her to intervene when a number of pupils were unsure of how to tackle part of the problem. This intervention clarified the approach and enabled almost all pupils to make good progress.

Where teaching was less effective, the pace of lessons was not always appropriate. Activities were allowed to go on too long and children became distracted and the rate of progress fell. Teachers do not always modify their plans or intervene when groups of pupils are not making enough progress. Some pupils were not sufficiently challenged by the work planned and, as a result, their progress was limited.

Teachers' expectations of the standards pupils are capable of reaching are not always high enough and planning does not fully incorporate provision for individual pupils within broad ability groupings. Teachers' expectations of pupil achievement, however, are being raised. This is because they are gaining confidence in assessing standards accurately which helps them plan more effectively for pupils of different abilities and set more challenging targets. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are now established but are not used with sufficient rigour to accelerate rates of progress.

Curriculum planning does not take into account fully the transition between the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 so that progress can be maintained and accelerated in Key Stage 1. The current range of curriculum activities does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to engage in high quality discussion to help them improve the quality of their written work. There are insufficient opportunities to develop high quality written work across the curriculum. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have completed the early stages of a comprehensive curriculum plan for the school. This rightly incorporates a range of skills and content but also important aspects of learning, such as creativity, problem solving and independent learning.

The school provides good opportunities for enrichment including the visit of a large truck to demonstrate aspects of road safety for all pupils. Pupils also

have opportunities to learn to swim and take part in drama and sporting activities.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in June 2005

- help staff be more effective at checking and tracking pupils' progress so they can plan a curriculum and lessons that match the learning needs of pupils with different capabilities – satisfactory.

## **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management are satisfactory with some good features. The strong leadership of the headteacher and her resilient, clear focus on improving achievement and standards is creating a momentum of improvement in the school. She now has the support of a deputy headteacher who is already improving provision in the areas of special educational needs and assessment and supporting the existing well developed monitoring procedures.

Subject leadership varies in quality. The numeracy subject leader provides good leadership and is beginning to raise achievement. This is based on sharp analysis of problems leading to clear well implemented plans which are evaluated and shown to be effective in improving pupils' progress. For example, a small number of pupils were identified as having weaknesses in some basic mathematical skills. An intervention programme was set up to tackle this problem and resulted in all of those pupils making rapid progress. This pattern of 'plan – do – review' is being successfully applied in an increasing number of areas of the school's work. Both the literacy and numeracy subject leaders have clear action plans although their targets are not sharp enough. Subject leadership in other areas of the curriculum is less well developed.

The governing body is using a wide range of information such as their own focused visits, analysis of test results, findings from parent questionnaires sent out by the school and pupil presentations to form an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This helps governors form questions to hold the school to account more effectively and also enables them to make better informed decisions about the school.

The systematic monitoring procedures set in train by the headteacher and the governing body are providing the school with increasingly detailed information on achievement. This is helping them to plan effectively for further improvement. The school still has much to do but is demonstrating that it has a strong capacity for further improvement.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in June 2005

- put in place effective management systems and procedures that clearly focus on raising achievement and enable staff and governors to acquire the skills to evaluate the impact of their development actions and spending decisions to improve teaching and learning especially in Years 1 to 4 – good
- keep parents informed of developments and take account of their views – satisfactory.

### **External support**

The support provided by the LA is good. The evaluations carried out by the LA indicate clearly where the school is making progress and provide a clear agenda for further improvement. The headteacher has been well supported by the LA in developing and implementing her strategies for school improvement. Much of the improvement in teaching and learning can be attributed to the work of the LA in partnership with the school. Practical support such as team teaching, checking the standards of work produced by pupils, lesson observation, and modelling of teaching approaches provided by leading teachers is effective. The work of the governing body continues to be enhanced by the additional governors. A strong feature of the support provided is its response to needs identified with the school.

### **Main Judgements**

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Ensure transition arrangements from Reception to Y1 enable pupils to progress speedily.
- Sharpen the provision for groups of different ability and raise further teacher and pupil expectation of achievement.
- Develop more opportunities for writing across the curriculum.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Director for Children and Education for Wiltshire and the Director of Education for the Diocese of Bristol.

Yours sincerely

Tom Winskill  
**H M Inspector**