



13 June 2006

Ms C Windwood  
Acting Headteacher  
Oakridge Community Primary School  
Coronation Avenue  
Hinderwell  
North Yorkshire  
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Dear Ms Windwood

## **SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF OAKRIDGE COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

### **Introduction**

Following my visit to your school on 8 and 9 June 2006, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in November 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**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the two acting headteachers, groups of pupils, staff, parents, governors, and representatives from the local authority (LA).

### **Context**

The headteacher has been absent on sick leave since March 2006.

### **Achievement and standards**

Overall achievement remains inadequate because it is too early to see the full impact of the steps taken by the school on results in all year groups. However, there are many encouraging signs that the picture is beginning to change. More stable staff and better quality teaching are beginning to make a difference to how fast pupils are progressing. Structured programmes in literacy are also helping them to make more progress. Internal school test

results in some year groups now show satisfactory progress, for example in Year 3. In the lessons observed, most pupils made satisfactory progress and some were making good progress. Where this was not the case it tended to depend on whether individual pupils were able to work independently without constant supervision by the teacher or classroom assistant. This independence was less evident in the Year 5 and 6 class. A few more able pupils still underachieve.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in November 2005:

- Raise levels of achievement in Year 1 to Year 6— inadequate progress

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

This aspect was not inspected in depth because it was satisfactory at the last inspection. Most pupils enjoy being at school; they say they are happy and by and large their parents agree. Pupils interviewed felt that school had improved. Most specifically, their lessons were much more interesting. In the lessons observed, pupils were usually keen to take part and most were attentive. Pupils are taking more care with the presentation of their work than at the time of the last inspection. The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around school. The school is successfully encouraging good relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff, to underpin learning.

### **Quality of provision**

Teachers have benefited from intensive support provided by the LA's consultants and from the good opportunities created to observe and learn from colleagues in other schools. The lessons observed were interesting and stimulating, and all were satisfactory or better. A structured programme of support for the newly qualified teacher has been implemented. Teachers plan their lessons well, with different tasks for particular groups and a clear idea of the aims of the lesson, shared with pupils. Individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) have been reviewed. However, as yet there is no overall policy for promoting the achievement of the most able pupils. Teachers use interactive technologies well to make the lessons come to life and to explain or to involve and encourage pupils to take an active part. Attitudes to learning are mostly good. Pupils generally respond well, though a few cannot keep concentration without the teacher standing over them, noticeably in the oldest class. The curriculum is satisfactory, and has been improved with the structured literacy and numeracy programmes now in place. These are beginning to have a positive effect on developing basic skills, and particular help is targeted at some individual pupils. The quality of care, guidance and support is improving: parents feel happy that their children are well cared for and that they can

raise any concerns with the school. Assessment is improving; it is adequate, with recent initiatives such as pupil targets and steps for improvement welcomed by pupils and parents. Teachers have a better understanding of their role in assessment and how they will do this, and expect to have a school-wide system up and running from September 2006.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in November 2005:

- Build on the emerging strengths in teaching and eliminate the weaknesses so that pupils' learning is accelerated – good progress

### **Leadership and management**

The school now judges its leadership and management as satisfactory; this is supported by the evidence from this monitoring visit. There has been particularly rapid progress since the appointment of the two acting headteachers in March 2006, when the school action plan was drawn up and implementation began. These two headteachers have brought experience from successful schools to bear and have developed a cohesive team of staff who work well together. They have successfully rebuilt relationships with parents and the local community. Parents who talked with the inspector said that community spirit had improved and most felt that their children were happier. 'Parents and school are pulling together more' and 'the school seems more relaxed and approachable' were typical of the comments. One main factor in parents' satisfaction was the greater stability and continuity in teaching. There are good systems in place for monitoring the quality of lessons. The acting headteachers are correct in evaluating that the quality of the teaching has improved. Coordinators for the core subjects have been appointed and this has been beneficial to sharing good ideas. Governance is much improved. The governors have a much better strategic understanding of how the school is doing and, through a system of link governors focusing on each key issue raised in the last report, have begun to monitor how the planned actions are being carried out. For example, child protection procedures and the policy for use of the Internet have been checked. Overall, there is strong sense of cohesion amongst management, governors, staff and parents which, together with the signs of improvement already seen in teaching and learning, indicate that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in November 2005:

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels and make sure pupils are safe and happy in school - good progress
- Improve relationships with parents and the immediate community – good progress

### **External support**

The support provide by the LA has been outstanding. Following the absence of the headteacher, two acting headteachers have been appointed to share the running of the school, one of whom has worked closely with the school for some time in an advisory capacity. The LA has prepared a detailed plan showing clearly the actions it will take to raise achievement and to tackle the points for improvement detailed in the last inspection report. This indicates the resources and advice it will provide and the means by which it will check how effective these have been.

High quality, specialist advice has been provided though consultants, for example on literacy and numeracy. Good opportunities have been provided for teachers to learn from good practice in other schools either through links, such as with an advanced skills teacher in science, or through visits to high-achieving local schools. A coordinator for special needs was appointed for a period to review the provision for pupils with LDD. The link adviser has been particularly effective in promoting and coordinating these initiatives and in assuring regular monitoring visits to the school to provide support. As a result of the LA's actions, teaching has improved and there are some signs that learning too is improving. The LA has strengthened the working of the governing body by the appointment of an additional governor with relevant educational experience.

### **Main Judgements**

Progress since being subject to special measures – good.

Quality of LA's statement of action – outstanding

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

## Priorities for further improvement

- Raise levels of achievement in Year 1 to Year 6.
- Implement effective systems to track the progress pupils make.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of recent initiatives to raise achievement.
- Devise a policy to promote the achievement of the most able pupils.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Education for North Yorkshire.

Yours sincerely

Honoree Gordon  
**H M Inspector**