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Mrs B Harris  
Associate Headteacher  
Carlinghow Princess Royal Junior Infant and Nursery School  
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Dear Mrs Harris

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF CARLINGHOW PRINCESS ROYAL JUNIOR INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

### Introduction

Following my visit with Lesley Traves, Additional Inspector, to your school on 14 and 15 November 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 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

Inspectors observed lessons in each class and one assembly. Discussions were held with the associate headteacher, key staff and pupils. Discussions also took place with the newly appointed headteacher, two governors and a representative from the local authority (LA). A range of documents was examined and pupils' conduct was observed around the school and at breaktimes.

### Context

Since the previous visit the associate deputy headteacher has left and a new assistant headteacher has been appointed. A new permanent headteacher has also been appointed and will take up post in January 2007. Three teachers are currently on long-term sickness leave including the teacher responsible for learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## Achievement and standards

The provisional results in the national tests for Year 6 in 2006 showed that the number of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in mathematics and science declined from 2005, although in English this figure improved. However, writing scores were particularly low, with only a third of the year group achieving Level 4 or above, the standard expected for their age. There was a wide margin between teacher assessments and the test results in both reading and writing. Girls did not do as well as boys in any of the three subjects. This poor performance results from a legacy of underachievement by these pupils.

Teacher assessments of standards at the end of Year 2 in 2006 also showed a dip compared to those of the previous year. In reading, writing and mathematics fewer children achieved Level 2, the basic standard expected for seven-year-olds. However, there was a slight increase in the number achieving Level 3 in reading and mathematics: no pupils achieved this higher level in writing.

The school has continued to improve its systems for monitoring pupils' progress and identifying underachievement. Staff now have a better picture of how well individual pupils are doing and whether they are on track to achieve as they should. They are able to see at a glance if progress is stalling and can identify who needs more support or more challenge. However, it is too soon to measure the full impact of this. Pupils identified as gifted or talented are beginning to make better progress but not in all lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not doing as well as they should because information about their needs is not used well enough to ensure that they have individual plans to help them make the expected progress.

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

- Raise standards and improve progress for all groups of pupils but especially for the more able and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. – inadequate

## Personal development and well-being

The raft of strategies implemented by the school to improve behaviour is paying off. Pupils' behaviour is continuing to improve and the school is a calmer place. Pupils are pleased that fewer incidents of bad behaviour occur and that their learning is less disrupted. They are particularly impressed with the way in which the school deals with the decreasing incidents of bullying. They say that behaviour at lunchtimes is better because of the range of activities on offer to them, both indoors

and out. They really appreciate the activities provided in the 'mentor room', which include snooker, table football and art and craft. The sterling help provided by the behaviour support mentor team is having a big impact on both behaviour and learning. Much hard work has been undertaken to support pupils who find it more difficult to conform and to provide them with strategies to help them cope in different situations. The breakfast club is valued highly by pupils and parents and provides a great start to the day. Pupils generally get on well with each other and with their teachers: they have a much better understanding of what is acceptable behaviour towards others. Consequently, most classrooms now have a calm, working atmosphere where learning can take place with minimal disruption.

Pupils' attitudes to learning have also improved, largely because of better teaching. They enjoy lessons that are practical and that keep them fully interested. When lessons fail to provide sufficient interest or challenge some pupils quickly switch off, concentration dips and progress slows. However, this happens less frequently than in the past.

Improved links with parents mean they get support from governors and staff to help them with their children's learning. As a result many parents now have a better understanding of how the school works and what it is trying to achieve. Parents come into school more often and have become increasingly involved in a range of social events for their children, culminating recently in a very successful Halloween disco. However, too many pupils still do not come to school often enough. Some successes have been achieved with individuals and families, but there are still a few families who resist the school's efforts to convince them of the importance of pupils attending regularly.

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

- Improve the behaviour of pupils – good
- Work with parents, carers and pupils to improve attendance – satisfactory

### Quality of provision

In most lessons improved teaching and higher expectations are leading to better learning. The pupils say that they have never worked so hard. Good relationships are evident and teachers have a better understanding of how pupils learn. Many teachers now focus on praising good behaviour rather than criticising when it is poor. Most lessons start by sharing exactly what is to be learned and this helps pupils to understand what they have to do and what is expected of them. Lessons often end with interesting and imaginative summaries of what has been achieved and this consolidates learning well.

The quality of teaching has improved since the last visit. Some inadequate teaching was observed but more good lessons were seen, some of which had outstanding features. Pupils learn best when they are actively involved in practical work that helps them learn by doing rather than by being told what to do. Common weaknesses in teaching remain such as teachers talking too much at the start of lessons and teachers talking over pupils' chatter. It is in these lessons that pupils do not make enough progress. Most teachers use assessment procedures appropriately and have a better understanding of the use of targets to ensure every pupil makes the expected progress. However, not all teachers fully understand what it is that the pupils need to do next to improve their work. Individual plans for pupils with specific learning needs are not detailed enough and do not contain some important information for teachers.

Teaching assistants have a clearer understanding of their role and how they can contribute to the learning of all pupils, as well as those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Because they are now involved more in planning the lessons and in staff training sessions, the teaching assistants have a better knowledge of the aim of each lesson and what is to be learnt. This has contributed well to the improved learning but has not yet made an impact on standards.

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

- Make better use of teaching assistants to improve pupils' progress. – satisfactory

### Leadership and management

The associate headteacher has clarified the roles and responsibilities of senior managers and solid foundations for improvement have been laid. The senior leadership has been strengthened by the addition of an assistant headteacher. Managers share a common purpose to improve and staff morale is higher. There is an appropriate and increased focus on raising standards. Managers have a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how their responsibilities relate to improving it. Plans for improvement are still too wordy but more recent documentation is showing a tighter focus on the impact of plans rather than the content of them. Support provided by the LA has been substantial and has contributed well to improving teaching and behaviour. Systems for tracking how well each pupil is doing have improved and are being used more effectively to match work to the needs of individuals.

Senior managers have, with support from the LA, identified weaknesses and set about tackling them. Monitoring procedures have continued to improve. However, strategies for eradicating weaknesses in teaching are still not robust enough and senior managers have been slow to ensure that all teaching is consistently of high

quality. Programmes of support for teachers experiencing difficulties have been developed but have had only limited impact. Senior managers recognise that progress has been slower than anticipated in the support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including the provision and management of resources. Strategies to support this group of pupils are not sufficiently robust to identify and tackle achievement or to ensure that problems with learning do not become problems with behaviour.

The governing body continues to improve. The governors ask more questions of the headteacher and have undertaken additional training in data analysis. Governors understand their role and are becoming more directly involved with the work of the school.

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

- Ensure all school leaders and the governing body meet their responsibilities to raise standards, improve teaching and enhance pupils' personal development.  
– satisfactory

#### External support

The LA has continued to fulfil its commitments to the school very well through the hard work of the school contact officer and a range of consultancy support. This involvement has been much appreciated and well targeted at the school's needs. The realistic and accurate view of how well the school is doing has resulted in appropriate plans for further support. With the appointment of the new headteacher the LA's contact officer judges correctly that the time is right for reducing the intense support currently being provided.

#### Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since the previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed with prior consultation.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that pupils with specific learning needs or disabilities are clearly identified so that they are able to achieve more in lessons.
- Ensure teachers are able to use information about pupils' progress to accurately plan the next steps in pupils' learning.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Children's Services for Kirklees.

Yours sincerely



Anthony Briggs  
Additional Inspector