



27 September 2006

Mr L Keel  
Executive Headteacher  
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Malvern Road  
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Dear Mr Keel

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF THE KILBURN PARK SCHOOL

### Introduction

Following my visit with Anna Savva, Additional Inspector, and Michael Lafford, Additional Inspector, to your school on 19 and 20 September 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 March 2006.

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 executive headteacher, the inclusion manager, a group of pupils, the chair of governors, and two representatives from the LA. They spoke informally with staff and pupils during the course of their work.

### Context

The temporary headteacher in post at the time of the inspection left when her contract expired. From April, a new executive headteacher has been seconded from the Local Authority (LA). One teacher died at the start of the summer term and two left during or at the end of the summer term. Two teachers were appointed during the summer and one started in September.

Existing staff have been appointed in a temporary capacity as phase leaders and members of the senior leadership team from the start of the autumn term. As a result of the continuing re-building works, one Year 3 class is currently operating in cramped conditions that do not support good learning. The playground space is limited and resources are spread around corridors. The building is due for completion by half term.

### Achievement and standards

As noted in the inspection of March 2006, pupils' achievement is inadequate. In the national tests in 2006, 69% of the pupils achieved Level 4 in English, 46% in mathematics and 58% in science. The proportion who achieved the higher level, Level 5, in English was 15%, in mathematics 6% and 12% in science. These figures are similar to those of 2005 in English but represent a significant fall in mathematics and science. The school did not meet its targets and the figures are low in comparison with the national picture. In all three subjects, girls' results were higher than the boys'. This was most significant in writing where twice as many girls reached Level 4. These results represent significant underachievement when compared with what pupils could do when they started at the school in Year 3.

In lessons, standards in English are below age-related expectations and pupils are not achieving as much as they should, especially in writing. Speaking and listening, and knowledge of vocabulary are also below the standards expected for their age. For example, pupils in Year 6 are struggling to use basic adjectives to describe characters in a book. In mathematics, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, which are being revealed during lessons. Basic multiplication facts, for example, are not secure and this slows the pace at which pupils work. Frequently, older pupils are not familiar enough with mathematical terms that they should know.

### Personal development and well being

Pupils' personal development and well being are satisfactory. Since the inspection in March 2006, there have been a number of initiatives to eliminate unacceptable behaviour in lessons. Behaviour has improved as a consequence. In all but one of the lessons observed pupils' attitudes to their learning and their behaviour were at least satisfactory. They were good in about a third of lessons. The behaviour of pupils around the school is generally good. They are consistently polite and enjoy positive relationships with each other. The Friendship Squad, for which pupils volunteer to train as mentors, has proved to be a popular and successful initiative. By their willingness to join, a significant number of pupils have demonstrated that they are keen to accept responsibility for helping to foster good relationships

and to make sure that everyone feels safe. Relationships between pupils and adults are sound. Attendance remains at around the national average but fewer pupils arrive late for school than at the time of the inspection. The school does not make adequate provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Some aspects are covered by other areas of the curriculum but there are no schemes of work in place. Teachers do not do enough to encourage teamwork in lessons. When they do, pupils show that that can work productively together.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2006:

- Improve behaviour in lessons, particularly amongst older pupils - satisfactory progress

### Quality of provision

Although there were examples of satisfactory and occasionally good teaching, the overall quality of teaching remains inadequate. As a result, pupils are not yet making consistent progress or beginning to catch-up some of the basic skills they need.

The executive headteacher has put in place curriculum guidelines to support teacher's planning across year groups and to ensure pupils receive a balance of subjects. He has also ensured that test data in English and mathematics is available to provide a basis for teachers to plan to meet pupils' needs. However, teachers are not yet using this effectively. As a result, the quality of planning for the full range of abilities within classes is too variable. In particular, teachers' planning for the higher attainers is weak. Too often, higher attaining pupils complete the work of the middle attaining groups before moving on to an extension activity. Planning does not yet meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties. Systems for providing targets for these pupils are at an early stage of development. Consequently, they do not receive the structured support they need and are underachieving. Teaching assistants have yet to receive specific training to meet the needs of these pupils. The quality of support they provide during lessons is variable, especially during the introductions to lessons.

There has been an improvement in teaching resources and, where these are used effectively, pupils are engaged and keen to learn. For example, in the better lessons, the teachers' use of the interactive whiteboard engaged pupils well. This was especially effective where the focus for learning was made clear and when pupils were asked challenging questions. In weaker lessons, learning intentions were not always shared or adequately explained. At times,

the pace of learning was slow, especially where pupils sat passively during lengthy explanations and there was an imbalance between the teacher's input and the level of pupils' participation. Where teachers selected the same few pupils to respond to questions, pupils' engagement was limited and opportunities to assess their knowledge and understanding were restricted. Pupils also underachieved in those lessons where teachers' questions were too simple and did not require them to think more deeply.

In general, teachers are following the schools' behaviour policy effectively. Just occasionally, even in satisfactory lessons, there is an over emphasis on managing pupils' behaviour and this borders on nagging which becomes counterproductive. At times, good behaviour was ignored and this did little to encourage pupils to participate and be enthusiastic about learning. This was in contrast to the good lessons where there was a positive atmosphere set by the class teacher's enthusiastic approach. Pupils were clear about what they had done well and the teacher's praise set a good example for other pupils to follow. In these lessons, learning intentions were communicated clearly so that all pupils had a good understanding of what was expected of them. Constructive written feedback was evident in several classes and, notably, in Year 4 English books. Teachers written comments confirmed strengths and the next steps for development. However, this was not consistent across the school. In some cases, marking in pupils' books is non-existent.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2006:

- Ensure that all pupils receive consistently good teaching based on careful planning, so that they achieve as well as they can throughout the school - inadequate progress

## Leadership and management

Leadership and management remain inadequate. The executive headteacher is giving the school a strong lead and a clear direction for improving the school's ethos by tackling incidents of poor behaviour. The implementation of the behaviour policy and strategies to improve behaviour has been successful. His energy and drive have helped to promote a positive commitment to improvement from staff, many of whom are inexperienced.

The newly formed senior leadership team is yet to meet this term to establish their responsibilities in whole-school improvement. Staff taking new roles, such as phase leaders, have not yet had them clearly defined although they are receiving training and support to carry them out. The LA and executive headteacher are beginning to develop senior teachers' skills and to build their capacity as leaders and managers. Subject leadership roles are just beginning

to be established. The new inclusion manager has reviewed procedures for identifying pupils' learning needs and for setting them appropriate targets. She is currently establishing a new system to assess the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language. However, this is at an early stage of development and as a result, pupils are not receiving the structured support they need.

The school improvement plan goes beyond the areas identified for improvement in the inspection of March 2006. This gives the school a large agenda. There is a strong commitment in the plan to raising standards and intended actions are appropriate. However, the time scales for taking action are not sharp enough and not all actions have success criteria by which the school can measure their impact. The main weakness is that the plan identifies no clear structures for monitoring the actions and evaluating their effectiveness in raising standards. To a large extent, this school improvement plan is likely to be replaced by the 'Raising Attainment Plan' when the school embarks on the Intensifying Support Programme this term.

The executive headteacher has devised a clear overview for monitoring the school's work during the coming year. This is a potentially good structure which includes formal lesson observations. So far, however, staff have not been given clear guidance on what constitutes good teaching and the monitoring of the quality of teaching has not taken place in a systematic way. The use of performance data to identify areas for whole-school improvement is just beginning again and the executive headteacher has had to start afresh to develop systems for tracking pupils' progress over time. At present, this information is not used systematically to set targets for individual pupils or to help teachers with planning to meet pupils' needs.

Governors are beginning to function as a corporate body through the new committee structure but are still led strongly by the executive headteacher and LA officers. The LA is still managing the school's finances and providing governors with training for their roles.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2006:

- Provide strong leadership and management focused on improving learning - inadequate progress

### External support

The LA took robust action to tackle weaknesses in the school's leadership, management and governance before the school was made subject to special measures. This included appointing two additional governors and withdrawing

financial delegation from the governors. Its statement of action fulfils requirements and provides a clear structure for how the LA intends to continue to support the school. The LA has set an ambitious date of April 2007 for the removal of special measures which signals a strong sense of urgency.

Since the inspection of March 2006, the LA has sustained a good level of support for the school. Of particular note are the positive impact of the behaviour support team and the secondment of a LA adviser to the role of executive headteacher. A consultant deputy headteacher is supporting the development of members of the senior leadership team. The school's link adviser monitors progress half-termly. Her recent monitoring of the quality of teaching provided a valuable opportunity for members of the senior leadership team to undertake dual observations of lessons to develop their skills. It also gave staff helpful feedback on how to improve their work.

#### Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- Develop the roles of senior staff to set clear expectations of what constitutes good teaching and learning and, alongside the headteacher, implement a programme of monitoring the quality of provision.
- Establish and implement robust systems for identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of School Improvement Services for Brent.

Yours sincerely

Jane Wotherspoon  
H M Inspector