



2 March 2007

Mr L Taylor
Headteacher
Green End Primary School
Burnage Lane
Burnage
Manchester
M19 1DR

Dear Mr Taylor

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF GREEN END SCHOOL

Introduction

Following my visit with Mr D Aitken and Mrs D Shields, Additional Inspectors, to your school on 28 February and 1 March 2007, 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 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 the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with key staff, a group of pupils, the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority.

Context

Since the visit in November, a temporary member of staff has left. A permanent replacement has been appointed but has not yet taken up post and there is currently a supply teacher covering the post. Two more supply teachers are covering vacancies due to illness, one for the deputy headteacher who had an accident earlier in the term. Several teaching assistants are currently absent and are being covered by temporary replacements.

Achievement and standards

The Key Stage 1 results in 2006 were lower than in 2005 and the targets for 2007 are lower still, indicating a decline in standards anticipated by the school. Fewer than half of current Year 2 pupils are targeted to achieve the levels expected for pupils of that age, a much lower figure than should be the case. The Key Stage 2 test results in 2006 were broadly average in mathematics and science. They were very low in English, however, and results in this subject have declined over the past three years. Pupils' achievement was inadequate in English, but they achieved well in mathematics and satisfactorily in science. In all three subjects, the targets set for next year are lower than the national standards in 2006. Even if the 2007 targets are met, it will not guarantee that standards will be high enough.

Since the last visit, systems for tracking pupils' standards on a half-termly basis have been developed. These are helping the school understand where pupils are in their learning and their rate of achievement. The systems are a positive development, although they are very new and are not yet totally accurate or fully utilised. Nevertheless, they are giving useful indicators about pupils' progress. They show that, while pupils in Years 2 and 6 are broadly on course to meet the targets set for them, standards remain below average across the school and lower than they should be. Furthermore, while many pupils are making better progress in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics than previously, progress is uneven across classes and is not yet at a fast enough rate to improve standards sufficiently. Assessments made of pupils in the Foundation Stage have not been accurate in the past, showing inflated standards. Children enter the Nursery with low levels of knowledge and skills. However, the insecure assessments do not adequately indicate children's attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage and do not provide a useful basis for judging progress in Key Stage 1. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are aware that assessments are not fully accurate across the school and that this needs to be tackled to ensure that there is a better awareness of where pupils are in their learning and what needs to be done to improve it further. The new assessment systems give a much clearer indication of where strengths and weaknesses exist and thus what action is necessary. Currently, however, standards are not high enough and the rate of progress is not consistent enough across the school.

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

- Raise the standards attained by pupils in Key Stage 2, especially in English – inadequate
- Maintain the improved standards in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 – inadequate

Personal development and well-being

Pupils' attitudes to school and their learning continue to be good and most behave well both in class and at break-times. Their sense of ownership of the school is growing. Pupils are making good use of the opportunities to have a greater say in

the work of the school. Their self-esteem is enhanced when they see their views are being taken into account and by taking on new responsibilities, for example, for feeding back to classmates and staff. Pupils are also responding well to the increased incentives to promote good behaviour, for example, additional 'golden time' and merit stickers.

Attendance levels have dropped significantly since the last visit; they are now at 85%. The school attributes this primarily to higher levels of illness, an increase in poor punctuality and in parents taking children on holiday during term-time. The attendance figures are well below the high local authority target and the figure for similar schools nationally. The school has a number of appropriate incentives to improve attendance. However, the level of authorised absence is too high and the analysis of attendance patterns too superficial to suggest an imminent significant upturn in attendance.

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

- Improve levels of attendance – inadequate

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching and learning has not improved sufficiently since the last visit. Although some teaching is now good, there is still too much inadequate or barely satisfactory teaching in all key stages. The situation is exacerbated by the lack of a stable complement of effective teachers and teaching assistants.

Positive features to the teaching include the teachers' good management of pupils; consequently, relationships are good in most lessons. The school is having some success in widening the range of teaching and learning styles. Pupils are responding positively to increased opportunities to become more active in their learning. They are keen to answer questions and make good use of 'talking partners' to share ideas. Teachers' planning to meet the different needs of pupils has improved, but this is not yet a consistent feature. There are pockets of good practice; for example, in Year 5, where pupils are developing the confidence to use peer and self-assessment to review and improve their work. In other years, some of the marking is designed to move pupils on in their learning. Year 5 and 6 pupils who are gaining confidence with English as an additional language are well supported by specialist teaching, which is focused securely on their needs. These positives are outweighed by inconsistencies and other weaknesses. Teachers' expectations and questioning are often too limited to provide effective challenge and support. The right balance between teacher talk and pupils' independent activities is not maintained, slowing the pace of learning. The newly collected information on how pupils are progressing is not always detailed enough and is not used enough by teachers to inform their planning to meet pupils' individual needs. Some use is being made of individual targets for pupils but both the targets and their use are not sharp enough to move pupils' learning on.

The potential benefits of the newly created Foundation Stage Unit are not being realised. The learning environment has improved. It is bright and attractive, with new resources and easy access to the purpose-designed outdoor area. However, activities are not well planned. Group tasks are often not sufficiently stimulating or challenging. Pupils often lose interest as a result and staff have to spend too much time managing children's behaviour, slowing the pace of learning. There are examples of better practice, such as when a group of nursery children were having tremendous fun developing early numeracy skills through counting the number of children with different hair colour. However, opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and language skills and to promote their personal and social development are too often missed.

Well-intentioned changes in staffing have not yet led to demonstrable or sustained improvement in the quality of teaching across the school as a whole, and high levels of absence amongst support staff have reduced the impact of teachers' planning and the quality of support provided for pupils.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 – inadequate

Leadership and management

Managing the staffing issues that have occurred over the past few months, some of which have been outside of the school's control, has inevitably called heavily on the headteacher's time. Coupled with the deputy headteacher's absence, it has resulted in the pace of change at a strategic level not accelerating to the extent required, and so, despite considerable commitment and hard work, progress since the last visit is insufficient. One area where good progress has been made is the establishing of systems for tracking pupils' progress. Although the potential of the systems is not yet fully realised, they nevertheless provide the basis for a much clearer way of measuring the school's effectiveness and the means to monitor this and thus to take targeted action to improve the situation. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are aware of what the next steps need to be in this development. Other areas of weakness, such as the quality of some teaching, are being tackled but have not yet resulted in the required improvement.

The roles of other senior leaders and of middle leaders remain underdeveloped. Action has been taken on several fronts; the literacy and numeracy coordinators have been involved in leading some developments, because of the priority given to improving these areas. The roles of the key stage leaders are not clearly defined, however, and other subject leaders do not play a full role in monitoring the effectiveness of their areas of responsibility. Some satisfactory action is taking place to improve leadership and management where it is specifically required, such as the support being given in the Foundation Stage.

The chair and vice-chair of governors have a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are playing an increasingly effective role in monitoring the progress the school is making and in holding it to account. Most of the vacancies on the governing body have now been filled, but, inevitably, many governors are new in role and thus not yet able to make an effective contribution.

The school has been working within a balanced budget. Some of the latest calls on funds, for example, in relation to supply cover, have yet to be factored into the budget but the school is not anticipating any significant deficit at this point.

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

- Improve the capacity of senior managers and governors to evaluate the school's effectiveness – inadequate
- Improve subject leadership across the school – inadequate
- Reduce the budget deficit to allow for prudent financial management – satisfactory

External support

The local authority link adviser continues to give valuable advice and support to the school and has a good understanding of the issues it is facing and their impact on the progress being made. Other consultants, such as for the Foundation Stage, are also providing helpful support.

Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures– inadequate

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – inadequate

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school, in addition to Key Stage 2.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Chief Education Officer for Manchester.

Yours sincerely

Joan McKenna
Additional Inspector