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Mrs Christine Jones  
Headteacher  
Carlinghow Princess Royal Junior Infant and Nursery School  
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Dear Mrs Jones

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

### Introduction

Following my visit with Anna Dawson and Elizabeth Charlesworth, Additional Inspectors, to your school on 26 and 27 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 lessons in each class as well as the breakfast club and an assembly. Discussions were held with key staff and pupils. Discussions also took place with the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority (LA). A range of documents was examined and pupils' conduct was observed.

### Context

Since the previous visit a new permanent headteacher took up post in January 2007. Three teachers are currently on long-term sickness leave and supply teachers are covering most of their work.

## Achievement and standards

Standards remain low. This poor performance reflects a similar picture to pupils' standards at the time of the previous visit. Recent data analysis by the school has shown that there are still considerable numbers of pupils not achieving as well as they should.

Children continue to get off to a good start in the Nursery and make swift progress. However, the rate of progress is more variable in Reception. By the end of Reception, standards remain below those attained by most other children of this age. However, given their starting points on entry to the Nursery, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage.

In Years 1 and 2, because much of the teaching is inadequate, pupils' rate of progress falls considerably. Pupils are badly underachieving and too few are on track to reach the expected and higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, progress is variable because teaching ranges from good to inadequate. However, progress still remains inadequate overall, resulting in the low standards in English, mathematics and science.

Throughout school, pupils with a statement of special educational need make satisfactory progress in response to the individual support and help they receive. However, the quality of support for others with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for lower attaining pupils is variable and this is reflected in these pupils' uneven progress. New programmes to intervene and increase progress have recently been introduced to boost pupils' achievement but so far have met with limited success. For example, in mathematics in Year 5, standards have risen for a few pupils, but this has not been the case in Year 4. The full impact of interventions and booster work in both English and mathematics is not yet evident and, consequently, achievement is still not good enough. A similar picture is presented for more able pupils. In some classes, where the teaching is good, the pupils respond positively and work to their full capacity. Where teaching is inadequate and support is weak, work is too easy for the more able or other pupils to achieve their full potential.

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 new strategies introduced to improve behaviour are becoming more embedded in the routines of school life. As a result, behaviour has significantly improved since the

last visit and pupils value the calmer atmosphere that prevails in school because this helps them to learn better. The school is an oasis of calm in the turbulent lives of many pupils. They are enjoying school more and are beginning to take increased responsibility for the consequences of their actions and use the new 'time out' table to calm down before returning to learning or play. The introduction of pupil play leaders and a more structured role for support staff are enhancing playtime and lunchtime provision so that better use is made of the range of activities on offer. These structured activities are highly valued by pupils and have helped substantially to reduce incidents of bullying. Pupils are very keen to become play leaders and this is also leading to an increased sense of responsibility. The behaviour support mentor team continues to be effective in coming up with new ideas to improve behaviour. Their role has been redefined and they now know exactly what is expected of them.

In the best lessons, pupils' attitudes to learning continue to improve in response to exciting teaching, and pupils are eager to offer answers and to show how well they are learning. However, this is not consistent because there are still too many lessons where lacklustre teaching and boring activities result in disinterested pupils who resort to background chatter that distracts other pupils from learning.

The school continues to work very hard with parents and families to help them support their children's learning and development. Attendance and punctuality are improving very well as a result of highly focused efforts with individual pupils. Although there are still a few pupils with very low levels of attendance or who come to school late, this is an improving area. Communication with parents and carers has improved and parents value the efforts the school makes in helping them to understand and therefore support learning at home. For instance, a recent information pack shows how literacy and numeracy can be developed in everyday activities.

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 – good

### Quality of provision

Aspects of teaching continue to improve but it is the good lessons that are getting better rather than those that are of concern. Relationships between teachers and pupils continue to be a strength. This enables pupils to contribute their ideas freely and confidently. Many teachers give encouragement to pupils by telling them what they are doing well rather than criticising weaknesses, others do not. Nearly all teachers are applying the new discipline procedures and this ensures pupils know where they stand in every lesson. Pupils like this and are quick to complain if teachers

forget to follow the correct procedure. Planning is secure and the better lessons show very high levels of preparation. Inadequate lessons continue to be logically planned but this planning is not then carried forwards into practice. The biggest barrier to learning is that too much teaching is inadequate, particularly in Key Stage 1. Some teachers have not made the changes necessary to raise their performance. Consequently, too many lessons are boring and fail to inspire pupils or involve them enough in their learning. Common weaknesses in teaching identified at the last visit remain, such as too much talk at the start of lessons and teachers talking over pupils' chatter. This weak teaching is resulting in pupils' continued underachievement and inhibits their learning. Too many teachers have not grasped the concept that pupils' progress will not improve unless teaching is good. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of how hard pupils should be working and how well they should behave. Here, the pace of learning is brisk because teachers use a variety of exciting activities that really inspire the pupils to do well. These lessons display close working relationships between teacher and teaching assistant, with all pupils benefiting from this coordinated teamwork. However, too many teaching assistants do not help all pupils in the class to learn and do not take a full enough part in whole-class activities. They have not adapted their work from helper to educator.

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

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

## Leadership and management

The new headteacher has quickly and accurately evaluated the quality of teaching throughout the school through robust monitoring. She has brought a fresh pair of eyes to the school and her determination and strong leadership have improved morale. Governors, staff, parents and pupils all have confidence in her work. Some changes have been made to the roles and responsibilities of senior managers and this has successfully oiled the machinery of management. For example, the considerable talents of the assistant headteacher are now better utilised. There is a clear direction and a shared vision for the future and some recent initiatives, such as the behaviour policy and the structured playtime, have had immediate impact on the quality of education. Documentation has become leaner and more focused on outcomes. Observation of teaching has correctly identified several strengths that need to be shared and a range of weaknesses that need to be quickly resolved. It has also flagged up that too much teaching is inadequate and improvement strategies have not yet had enough effect. Rigorous monitoring and analysis of standards and progress have revealed a picture of significant underachievement and very low standards that appear to be getting worse. Too much time has previously been spent measuring the quality rather than taking some very difficult but very necessary decisions regarding how best to tackle persistent weaknesses in teaching. Governors and the headteacher recognise that it is now necessary for this slow progress to be tackled head on.

Governance continues to improve as members gain a better understanding of the issues facing the school and their responsibilities to address them. They have stronger links with parents and this is helping with pupils' personal development. As a result of a recent Frank report from the headteacher, they now have a much clearer view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are poised to support the headteacher in taking some difficult but vital actions to improve teaching.

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 taken a more 'back seat' approach in order to allow the new headteacher time to settle in but has continued to offer high quality support through its contact officer. This has enabled the headteacher to take control and drive forward her own ideas rather than those of an external body. There is a realistic understanding of what needs to be done to improve teaching and a commitment to providing the necessary support for the school to move on.

#### Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since the previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- Eradicate the inadequate teaching that continues to restrict pupils' learning and the progress they make.

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