



5 March 2007

Mrs Jeanette Adak  
The Headteacher  
Chalgrove Primary School  
Chalgrove Gardens  
Finchley  
London  
N3 3PL

Dear Mrs Adak

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF CHALGROVE SCHOOL

### Introduction

Following my visit with Lynne Kauffman and Gordon Ewing, Additional Inspectors, to your school on 21 and 22 February 2007, 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 October 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 spoke to the interim headteacher, staff, groups of pupils, parents, the chair and vice chair of the interim executive board, and a representative from the local authority.

### Context

Following the inspection in October 2006 an interim headteacher took up post in the week beginning 11 December 2006 on a part time basis which became full time from 1 January 2007. An interim executive was board put in place from 1 January 2007.

## Achievement and standards

Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress overall in lessons, but this progress is varied, with some pupils not making the progress that they should. Targets set for Year 6 in 2008 are below current school and national standards.

## Personal development and well-being

The school complies with the regulations for the safeguarding of pupils but a minor training issue is outstanding.

## Quality of provision

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships are good and sound behaviour management enables learning to take place. Teaching quality varies. The better teaching is lively and well matched to pupils' needs. It motivates and excites them to become active learners through thinking hard to solve problems, discussing enthusiastically in small groups, and responding to interesting visual materials.

In less successful lessons, work does not challenge all pupils to do as well as they could. Assessment and marking are not used effectively enough in planning or lessons to match work to pupils' needs. During these lessons pupils' progress and difficulties are not monitored or responded to skilfully enough to enable them to make good progress. Slow pace, restricted opportunities to think or discuss challenging problems, and teachers' limited subject knowledge sometimes hamper pupils' progress.

Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has started to improve. Factors contributing to this are the recently introduced planning time between class teachers and their support staff, the increase in data available to monitor pupils' progress against their individual targets and the formation of some small groups of underachieving pupils who receive targeted support from teaching assistants.

Monitoring and evaluation of lessons have insufficient impact on raising the quality of teaching. They place too little emphasis on pupils' learning and progress, so judgments err towards being too generous. The monitoring of planning has identified greater consistency between classes and some points for development. Nevertheless, evaluation of areas for improvement in

teaching is not linked to incremental professional development, and opportunities are missed to share good practice.

There are improvements in the use of assessment. Every teacher now has a clear baseline assessment for each pupil. For most year groups it reflects performance in last year's optional test results. The initial focus has been on literacy. This has improved the recording of attainment in reading and writing, and provided targets that focus the development of reading more effectively. There has been less development in mathematics and insufficient in science.

Lesson planning now takes account of separate groups within the class, but it is not linked clearly to prior assessment of attainment so does not maximise each pupil's progress. Planning is more focussed for the pupils that receive support from teaching assistants, who discuss with teachers the plans for subsequent lessons based on attainment in previous lessons. There is an increase in specially targeted provision for pupils achieving below nationally expected levels that has been informed by the baseline assessment. In the Foundation Stage, assessment is contributing to increasingly focussed lesson plans.

There are records of attainment against objectives in literacy and numeracy but they are not linked to National Curriculum levels. Assessment against National Curriculum levels is not in place at sufficiently frequent intervals to assist in monitoring progress. Across the school, records do not support the evaluation of pupils' progress in relation to national expectations.

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

- improve the rigour of monitoring and evaluation in order to ensure consistency and improvement in the quality of teaching – inadequate progress
- sharpen the way teachers use assessment to accelerate pupils' progress throughout the school and raise standards – satisfactory progress

### Leadership and management

The interim headteacher has established an ethos in the school that is clearly focussed on achievement. She is the driving force for change. The senior leadership team is beginning to work together effectively and staff morale is improving. Through regular meetings and a clear focus on the action plan the leadership team are setting a comprehensive agenda for improvement. Staff

are motivated and keen to contribute to the school's improvement. They feel valued and have helped to shape the post-inspection action plan. Consequently, they have a sense of commitment to it and a feeling of ownership of it.

The interim headteacher has put in place, with the support of the staff, parents, pupils and the local authority, a shared vision for the school. Lesson planning is more consistent and thorough and teachers are more focussed on improving pupils' progress. All staff are more aware of the link between planning and assessment. The interim headteacher has enabled teachers and teaching assistants to engage in valuable planning opportunities so that support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is more targeted and effective. Consequently, teaching assistants are more confident in their role in accelerating achievement through various intervention plans.

The new staffing structure has not been finalised although soundly-staged plans are in place to achieve this. As a result, specific job descriptions for middle managers are not in place. Nevertheless, through performance management and generic job descriptions middle managers have a clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Individual subject action plans are not in place and specific training is planned for the summer term to develop middle managers' competence in accelerating pupils' achievement. Performance management is now more focussed on ensuring that targets are set, and some are measurable. However, the process is not sophisticated enough to provide a clear picture of specific training needs or explicit links to gradual improvements in teaching, management and pupils' progress.

The parents are confident in the leadership of the interim headteacher and recognise early signs of improvement in several aspects of school life. They believe that she has brought new vigour and energy into the school. They have been consulted and the school has taken steps to respond to the issues they have raised. Communications between home and school have been strengthened by more detailed weekly newsletters, the sharing of information such as the homework policy, and the provision of individual literacy targets for each pupil. Parents say they are more confident in approaching the school regarding their concerns and many are happy with the response. However, some parents are concerned that some issues are not addressed effectively, including a number relating to provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Parents recognise that the senior leadership team is beginning to work together more effectively but feel much more needs to be

done to convince them that the early shoots of recovery will be sustained and the leadership team will continue to have a positive impact on school improvement. A key concern for many parents is whether effective plans are in place to secure the future leadership of the school.

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

- improve the school leadership team so that leaders work together effectively and are capable of driving forward school improvement – satisfactory progress
- improve school management such that all staff are clear about what needs to be done to accelerate achievement – satisfactory progress
- improve communication so that parents feel confident in the leadership of the school – satisfactory progress

#### External support

The local authority's statement of action meets requirements. The success criteria appropriately include impact. They do not contain the elements of the key issues relating to the systems that the school will need to have in place in order to demonstrate that it has the capacity for continued improvement. For example, they do not include the process for monitoring and evaluating teaching or the ways in which assessment is used to raise progress.

The local authority has provided sound support but it is too early to gauge the extent of its impact. The local authority has taken initial steps to address the key issue on the leadership team by putting in place an interim headteacher in whom staff and parents have confidence. Support provided by consultants has assisted development in literacy, assessment and numeracy. Evaluation has been astute in some areas, such as inclusion where weaknesses have been identified, but has not provided a strong model for improvement in lesson evaluation.

#### Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

Priorities for further improvement:

- increase the rigour and the focus on learning in the monitoring of lessons and link this to professional development to underpin gradual improvement
- use assessment more effectively in planning and teaching to improve pupils' progress
- improve the co-ordination of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, in particular by addressing parents' concerns
- ensure action planning leads to incremental improvement, including in middle management, and links to training plans.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of the interim executive board and the Director of Education for Barnet.

Yours sincerely

Gill Close  
H M Inspector