



12 March 2007

Miss Dawn Cotter  
The Headteacher  
Badock's Wood Primary School  
Doncaster Road  
Southmead  
Bristol  
BS105PU

Dear Miss Cotter

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF BADOCK'S WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Introduction

Following my visit with Sue Rogers, Additional Inspector and Chris Corp, Additional Inspector, 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 fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in October 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 the headteacher, associate headteacher and other members of the senior team, the vice chair of governors, the education welfare officer and the school's attached inspector.

### Context

Since the last monitoring inspection, the learning mentor and business manager have left the school. Because of financial constraints they have not yet been replaced. An associate headteacher, working three days a week, has joined the school on a short-term contract. The school has admitted several

pupils who are in the early stages of learning English and now receives specialist support one day a week.

## Achievement and standards

Since the last monitoring inspection, on-line information about the school's results in last year's tests and tasks has become available. The information adds some interesting detail to the overall figures. For example, low points scores at the end of Key Stage 1 were largely attributable to the poor progress made by a significant proportion of pupils who had identified learning difficulties. This was not replicated in Key Stage 2, however, where pupils with learning difficulties attained standards that were closer to those of similar pupils nationally.

Although the proportion of pupils in Year 6 reaching the expected standard for their age was very low, their achievement was satisfactory in both English and mathematics. This is because they generally made the progress that was expected of them, given their attainment at the age of seven and taking contextual factors into account. This is encouraging.

The school's tracking information shows that rates of progress are improving and are now satisfactory overall, but that the picture is patchy. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and Year 6 are generally making better progress than other year groups in reading, writing and mathematics.

The school is already taking steps to make sure that pupils who have learning difficulties are helped to make the progress they should; a close eye is kept on their achievement. Weaknesses in teaching are being tackled in order to accelerate progress in every year group.

## Personal development and well-being

One of the main focuses of the associate headteacher's work has been to continue the school's efforts to bring about greater consistency in the management of the pupils' behaviour, including at lunchtimes. This has brought about some improvements. On the whole, the pupils' behaviour is at least acceptable and for much of the time it is good. Helpful support is given to individual pupils who have difficulties in managing their own behaviour. The local authority has become involved in assessing the needs of a few so that they can be met in the way that is best for them. The number of exclusions is reducing. That notwithstanding, there is a small group of pupils whose behaviour is very challenging and which still has an adverse effect on their own and others' learning. Every effort is being made to minimise the

impact of poor behaviour. This is taking up a lot of time, but is having a positive effect as incidents reduce in number.

There has been a noticeable shift in attitudes to learning in many classes, which is linked to improvements in the quality of teaching. The pupils in the Reception classes, for example, are much more disposed towards learning than a term ago. In other classes, the pupils concentrate for longer periods, co-operate better with one another and show some enthusiasm for what they are doing. The pupils are beginning to respond with pleasure when given positive feedback about what they have achieved.

The school has taken a major step forward since September in dealing with the long-standing issue of poor attendance. Working well in partnership with the local authority, a clear structure for dealing with absence, encouraging attendance and following up individual cases has been established and, more importantly, is being strictly followed. This has led to significant improvements in the attendance of a number of pupils whose attendance was very poor indeed. The school and local authority acknowledge that it will take some time to bring about sustained change, but are encouraged by the individual successes and by a reduction in lateness. Parents are more involved in the processes and the school makes crystal clear to them that they are accountable for their children's attendance. Attendance for the first part of this academic year shows a slight improvement on the same period the year before.

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

- improve pupils' attendance at school – satisfactory progress

### Quality of provision

There has been steady progress in improving the quality of teaching and learning, which is satisfactory overall. The impact of better teaching can be seen in the increase in the pupils' progress. The school's approaches are beginning to embed, and support for individual teachers has brought about improvements, but there are still inconsistencies in practice. However, the proportion of teaching that is consistently good is not yet large enough to make sure that progress accelerates across the school. This means that pupils are not yet making up lost ground quickly enough.

The teachers are becoming more adept at managing the pupils' behaviour although some have more success than others. The teachers have to work very hard to engage the pupils, especially in Key Stage 2 where the legacy of too frequent changes of teacher and low expectations shows in their

entrenched negative attitudes to learning. However, the teachers' efforts are slowly chipping away at this and pupils are beginning to expect to learn in lessons. Where teaching is strongest, the pupils respond well to exciting and interesting activities. Good links between different subjects, for example art and science, also make lessons more relevant. These factors are sometimes missing from other lessons where opportunities to include practical demonstrations or to set the learning in context are missed.

The school now has more information about the pupils' attainment and is well placed to check that all are making the progress they should. Teachers check the information regularly in discussion with the headteacher and think about the best ways to help individuals and groups work towards their targets. However, there is scope to use assessment information to even better effect, for example, by identifying more precisely the next steps that pupils should take, from the Nursery class upwards. Currently, the teachers' daily plans are not amended in the light of what the pupils learned or struggled with the previous day. Marking continues to improve, but the quality of the feedback given to pupils still varies from class to class.

Good curriculum 'maps' have been produced for each year group. They ensure coverage of the statutory curriculum and show where teachers can usefully link subjects. This creates more opportunities for teaching basic skills and makes the teaching more interesting. There has been further work on adapting the national frameworks for English and mathematics and teachers have been given more flexibility to use this national guidance. As well as a focus on basic skills, opportunities for enrichment are given equal importance. For example, a professional musician is working with the oldest pupils and there are exciting plans to enhance outdoor learning by making use of the adjacent woods.

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

- raise pupils' standards and achievement, especially in English and mathematics, by improving the quality of teaching and the curriculum – satisfactory progress

### Leadership and management

Under the headteacher's firm and determined leadership, the school is continuing to build successfully on what it has already achieved. The headteacher has a clear vision for where the school is going, and in order to get there has set high expectations of herself, senior staff, governors and pupils. An important factor is that initiatives are now followed through without exception and everyone knows what they should be doing. The

associate headteacher's input has eased the burden somewhat on the headteacher and allowed her to devote more time to teaching and learning. The deputy headteacher is developing swiftly as part of the leadership team, despite his full-time teaching commitment. The governing body has also taken strides forward and functions more effectively as a critical friend. The work of this tier of leadership is good. The work of other senior and middle managers, however, is developing more slowly because they have yet to make the mental shift from being a co-ordinator to a leader.

As at the last monitoring inspection, the headteacher's evaluation of the school's performance and the progress it is making is astute, honest and accurate. For example, the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning are well known and steps are being taken to help weaker teachers to improve their practice, with some success. However, the school does not have enough consistently good teachers in order to bring about significant improvement from within by, for example, modelling for others, team teaching and coaching.

Further improvements in teaching, leading to even better progress for the pupils, together with improvements in the leadership of middle managers will be key factors in assuring that the school is well placed for the removal of special measures. Currently, the heavy and entirely necessary input from the local authority means that the school cannot yet demonstrate the capacity to improve on its own.

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

- develop the school's capacity to improve by raising the quality of leadership and management at all levels – satisfactory progress

### External support

The school has continued to receive a high degree of support from the local authority (LA), which is appropriate for its circumstances. The impact of the work is evident in the progress the school is making. Partnership working with the education welfare officer has been particularly effective in setting up watertight procedures for managing attendance. The work of consultants has continued to have a positive impact on attainment in writing. The LA is also funding the associate headteacher's post, which is providing much needed support at senior level. Half way through the last term, the support of a teaching coach was withdrawn. This was not helpful to the school, which continues to need outside help to raise the quality of teaching.

## Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

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

Yours sincerely

Linda McGill  
H M Inspector