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Ms Karen Khwaja  
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Dear Ms Khwaja

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF GARFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Introduction

Following my visit with Lynn Bappa, Additional Inspector to your school on 12 and 13 June 2007, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second 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 met with the headteacher, senior staff, the chair of governors and a representative from the LA.

### Context

Since the last monitoring visit, the secondment of the locum deputy headteacher who was in post for one term, ended and the permanent deputy headteacher resumed her position in March 2007. A new Year 3 teacher, also the science subject leader, was appointed in April and took up her post at the start of June 2007. The teacher appointed to give members of staff quality group planning time, will resume the booster sessions in September this year. Two Early Years' support teaching assistants have also been appointed, one to the reception and another to the nursery.

## Achievement and standards

Standards, although improving, remain well below average. The school now has comprehensive data on pupils' progress each term. The judgement on the likely upward trend in the recently taken national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 indicate that the results will be higher than in 2006, especially as more pupils are reaching the standard expected at the of Year 6. Most pupils are achieving the challenging targets with a significant minority exceeding them. The school's analysis of achievement shows that most pupils are making rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress accelerates most in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6 where pupils display more independent learning skills when problem solving and completing extended writing for different audiences.

The better progress that pupils are now making in lessons can be linked to the more robust way in which teachers are using assessment information and target setting to match work to individual needs. Additionally, there is the use of various learning strategies, in particular, booster sessions and the intensive support programme (ISP) which focuses on literacy and numeracy. In the lessons observed, standards of attainment were below those expected for their ages although the quality of pupils' work, including their oral response shows significant improvement. Progress in most lessons was reasonable, and good progress was seen in literacy in Year 5, in Year 2 numeracy and in the main snail activity in the children's language and communication targets in nursery. However, across the school, there is insufficient focus on ensuring that pupils fully use the various stages of the writing process to improve the quality of extended writing and presentation skills are still too slapdash.

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

- Raise standards and achievement in literacy and numeracy – satisfactory progress

## Personal development and well-being

Pupils' personal development and well-being remain good. They are clearly proud of their school. Children in the Foundation Stage settle quickly and make good strides in their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils enjoy lessons and other activities, behave well and show positive attitudes to their lessons. The school has worked extremely hard with parents to ensure that their children come to school regularly and on time. A good range of strategies have been put into place to improve both attendance and punctuality. These actions, which include both an effective reward system as well as the decision to take court action where necessary, are beginning to bear fruit. As a result, the school is now regularly meeting or exceeding the targets set for it, although attendance remains below the national average, largely due to the difficulties caused by those families who take extended family visits abroad. Attendance throughout this inspection was 95.2% on the first day and 94% on day two.

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

- Improve attendance and punctuality – good progress

### Quality of provision

The school has continued to work hard to improve the quality of teaching. The quality of teaching and learning was at least satisfactory in all lessons, including three where it was good. There are some good features in the satisfactory lessons. In the most effective lessons, the teachers had high expectations of what the pupils could do, understand and know within the allocated time. Lessons were taught at a brisk pace, paired, whole class and group and practical activities and a range of resources were used to engage and sustain the pupils' interests. The teachers used open-ended and probing questions effectively to increase pupils' thinking and assess their understanding of the work. The teachers made links to the learning objectives to help the pupils identify how much they had learnt.

In the satisfactory lessons, the pace was slower; evaluation at the end tended to be rushed, and planning, though good, was not consistently drawn on to make more demands on the pupils. The fussiness and low level talking of a small minority of pupils also affected the rate of learning.

The drive to focus on pupils' learning, and raise standards of achievement, is at the heart of what the school is trying to do and it is starting to succeed in this aim. As a result, standards are rising. Teachers' understanding of what the pupils are capable of achieving has improved. Tasks are more challenging and pupils are making better progress in their lessons. As one Year 6 pupil commented, 'Things are getting better. Work is more challenging now but teachers somehow make it fun too. I think the teachers enjoy the challenge too'. The whole-school focus on planning has had a positive impact on what is planned for individual pupils, especially those who are underachieving. Success criteria, however, are sometimes too vague so that teachers cannot easily identify whether or not pupils have met them and are ready to proceed to the next stage. In some lessons observed, teachers are beginning to make better use of linking subject specific skills so that pupils can transfer basic skills across subjects. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 numeracy lesson, pupils learnt about using meagre financial resources to budget the weekly shopping while talking about poverty and healthy eating as outlined in their study of Naidoo's, *Journey to Jo'burg*.

Teachers are making better use of teaching assistants so that they are providing much more effective support for learners, particularly those who have learning difficulties and disabilities. More work remains to be done, however, to ensure that pupils with English as an additional language are consistently given the support that they need. The school has plans to employ a specialist teacher with responsibility for supporting pupils at the early stage of learning English.

There were examples of good quality marking with clear targets for improving work. Pupils say that they now have a clearer understanding of what they need to do in

order to improve their work. In too many books, however, poor presentation and untidy handwriting were not challenged.

The school recognises that if pupils are to succeed, the curriculum needs to be modified to reflect their needs. The school has made good progress with its plans to develop the curriculum and use assessment information to monitor pupils' progress and improve planning. The increased focus on improving basic skills offers a good range of training for staff and learning opportunities for the pupils. The curriculum is therefore well matched to the pupils' needs and interests; it is now providing more individualised learning and extended learning sessions after school. The school is currently trialling a super-study club that provides extra basic core skills tuition for pupils. This extra support enables the pupils to have access to computer facilities and other resources to complete their homework. Further plans are in place to introduce thinking skills in order to boost the pupils' confidence and independent learning skills. A good range of enrichment activities provide further breadth to the curriculum.

There are now clear systems in place to collect and analyse data termly. This reliable data, moderated by the local authority, is reviewed termly and give clear information on pupils' progress in reading, writing and numeracy. Teachers are therefore able to spot underachievers, modify the curriculum and quickly put into place appropriate strategies to support individuals and groups of pupils. The use of assessment information is enabling teachers to target specific groups of pupils to receive intense specialist support from teaching assistants. For example, there is efficient deployment of support staff to work with the more able, those at the early stage of learning English or those with a learning difficulty or disability (LDD). Pupils are demonstrating a sound understanding of using their targets to check their achievements, mark and edit their work. While the school has comprehensive sets of assessment data, the information is not used to analyse achievement in relation to gender, ability, and language needs or ethnicity. The school is working well with the parents to increase their understanding of the expectations of what constitutes expected progress.

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

- Modify the curriculum and improve the quality of teaching and learning, especially increasing teacher's expectations, so that work is closely matched to the pupils' individual needs – progress is good in relation to the curriculum and satisfactory in relation to teaching.
- Support pupils' progress by making more effective use of teaching assistants – good progress
- Develop rigorous use of assessment information and monitoring procedures that will inform future planning for improvement – good progress

## Leadership and management

The headteacher's good leadership continues to move the school forward. She has worked assiduously with the senior leadership team to maintain the pace of change and increase accountability at all levels. Subsequently, the link senior team subject

leaders work as a cohesive and effective team; they are ready to identify recent improvements in their increased leadership and management role.

The headteacher's calm disposition has increased confidence and she has won the loyalty of staff. She is prepared to recognise and develop the skills of each member of staff. This has enabled the staff to give their views about the recent changes which are increasingly incorporated into the action plan and eventually into the school self evaluation (SEF). As a result, there is greater ownership of the actions outlined in the school action plan and staff are prepared to gallop with the planned changes, try out new approaches and share good practice. Regular consultation has enabled changes to be well paced and these are being embedded. For example, the procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are rigorous and involve regular reviews, in particular the demanding termly evaluations. Teachers are therefore clear about the purpose of the systems and have embraced them well as tools to improve teaching and learning.

The headteacher has an accurate understanding of performance, which is shared by the senior managers. There is clarity about the challenges the school faces to improve standards. The programme for monitoring teaching and learning and the evaluation of the action plan is thorough. Of importance is the rigorous review of the priorities for improvement which identifies the impact of changes and the next steps needed. Most actions are clearly cross referenced to items in the action plan. This is enabling the senior leaders to measure how well the school is on target to reach the milestones identified in the long term action plan. The school's capacity to bring about further improvement is therefore good, because professional development is ongoing and new skills are being spread widely for the benefit of school improvement. For example, senior leaders have either embarked on or completed the NPOH or NPQICL courses. There have been some useful training and coaching for middle managers and teaching assistants and the further development of these roles are promising. All staff have good opportunities to observe good and outstanding practice in other schools. The headteacher has rightly taken steps to ensure that all middle managers can have equal access to training to improve their capacity and ensure consistency in the leadership and management of all subject leaders.

Governors continue to give good support to the school and they fulfil their statutory duty well. The chair of governors previously gave much of his time to resolving the muddle over the financial arrangements for the children's centre because there were no clear national or local guidelines. This has now been resolved and he is now able to focus more on supporting the school improvement.

### External support

The local authority (LA) has continued to provide a range of good support for the school, which is effectively tailored to the needs of the action plan, staff and pupils. In the LA's interventions, there has been an increasing recognition of the need to prioritise teaching and deploy the consultants, for example, in supporting the

programmes for improving reading, writing and numeracy. The consultants' work, for example, in supporting the teaching of literacy and numeracy, is highly valued by the school and has resulted in subject leaders adopting a more rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. This improvement is leading to pupils making better progress than expected because teachers are now using a more structured approach to teaching. The teachers are also increasingly aware of the importance of using assessment information to critically assess pupils' progress. Some of the school's ideas about bringing about meaningful school improvement school are to be shared in the LA.

## Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good. Whilst teaching is still satisfactory overall, the long term impact is leading to pupils making better progress.

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed subject to the following qualification:

- The senior team remains fully in place
- The LA and school provide appropriate mentoring support and training opportunities.

## Priorities for further improvement

- Continue to work on the quality of teaching so that more of it matches the best. In particular, ensure that success criteria are clearly stated so that pupils understand, know and can identify the skills learnt.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Education for Enfield.

Yours sincerely

Carmen Rodney  
H M Inspector