

Cambridge Education  
Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

T 01223 578500  
F 01223 578501  
risp.inspections@camb-ed.com

Ofsted helpline  
0845 640 4045



14 December 2007

Mrs M Vaissiere  
Headteacher  
Bawdeswell Primary School  
Fakenham Road  
Bawdeswell  
Dereham  
Norfolk  
NR20 4RR

Dear Mrs Vaissiere,

**SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF BAWDESWELL  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Following my visit to your school on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> November 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 February 2007. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of Governors and the Director of Children's Services for Norfolk.

Yours sincerely

Tricia Pritchard

H M Inspector

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF BAWDESWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the second monitoring inspection: 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> November 2007

### Evidence

HMI observed lessons, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher, pupils, staff, the chair of governors and two representatives from the local authority.

### Context

September 2007 saw a reduction in the number of classes from four to three. Currently, there is one combined Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 class, one class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils and one class of year 5 and Year 6 pupils. Two part-time teachers left in July 2007 and have not been replaced. It is planned that the acting county headteacher will remain in post until a permanent headteacher is appointed.

### Achievement and standards

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has received the 2007 pupil performance data. Although the evidence confirms that the Year 2 pupils' scores for reading, writing and mathematics were below the national average, it masks the fact that they made satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. This was a small cohort of six pupils with a higher than average proportion of pupils with additional learning difficulties. Currently, pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in Reception and in Years 1 and 2.

In Key Stage 2, standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 were below the national average and pupils' progress between Year 3 and Year 6 was well below the national average. In this cohort of 18 pupils, four pupils had additional learning needs. However, these pupils did better than pupils with similar needs in other schools. It was the middle and higher attaining pupils who did not do so well. A key factor was the inadequate progress they had made earlier in Key Stage 2, which had held them back. Although the school's records show these pupils made faster progress in Year 6, they had too short a time to catch up. Consequently, this accelerated progress was not reflected in their test results.

Currently, pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in English and the school's tracking records show that standards are rising. In Year 3 and Year 4, there is clear evidence in pupils' books that many are making good progress with their writing. There is still a gap between their reading and writing skills but is not as wide as it was previously. In mathematics, pupils' progress is erratic between classes and standards are not rising at the same rate. Although most pupils are making better progress this year, some pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are underachieving and making inadequate progress. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, are not doing as well as they could.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2007:

- raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 - satisfactory progress

### Personal development and well-being

Pupils' personal development and well-being continue to be satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school and parents' responses to the recent questionnaire confirm this. However, despite the school's best efforts, attendance remains below the national average. Pupils have responded enthusiastically to the re-organisation and re-naming of classes. There is a good work ethos in each class. Pupils are very aware of the benefits of healthy eating and taking exercise and are proud that the school has achieved a healthy schools award. Their behaviour is good in lessons and in the playground.

### Quality of provision

The quality of teaching has improved since the inspection although there is still some inconsistency in Key Stage 2. Inadequate teaching has largely been eradicated. During this monitoring visit, mathematics teaching was observed in each class and the quality ranged from satisfactory to good. All lessons were well structured and teachers created a calm and well ordered learning environment. Where teaching was good, pupils were given practical apparatus to help them develop their understanding of fractions and measures. Lessons were well paced and teachers ensured that pupils consolidated their learning before proceeding to the next stage. Where teaching was satisfactory rather than good, not all pupils were given work which was well matched to their needs. For example, in one lesson observed, the work set for higher attaining pupils during the second part of the lesson was too difficult. The school is well staffed with teaching assistants who give high quality individual and group support to pupils with additional learning difficulties and disabilities. However, not all are well briefed by teachers in guiding pupils to use the correct mathematical vocabulary and in providing clear explanations to help pupils solve problems.

While no inadequate teaching was observed in lessons, a scrutiny of pupils' books revealed some inadequate learning in mathematics in Key Stage 2. Some pupils' mathematics books contain little work and indicate that higher, middle and lower attaining pupils are too often being given the same work. At times, there is overuse of whiteboards and too little recording in books. Some pupils' work is also unmarked.

There is more consistency in the quality of learning in English. This is reflected in improved writing standards across the school. Teachers are confident in recognising the features of good quality writing. Marking has improved and is focused upon giving pupils advice on how to improve the quality of their work.

The presentation of pupils' work has improved considerably. Fewer worksheets are being used, particularly in history and geography, and pupils are taking a pride in their work. The curriculum is underpinned by a strong emphasis on literacy and

numeracy and this is highly appropriate. However, the curriculum is also broad and gives pupils good opportunities to explore their interests in the creative arts and sport. The regrouping of classes has been a positive move. With one Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 class and two Key Stage 2 classes, teachers are finding it easier to plan the curriculum.

The assessment of pupils' progress and attainment is now robust. All pupils are tracked closely. Formal assessment of their work is carried out half-termly and assessments are accurate. The outcomes are used well to target pupils who are falling behind in literacy and numeracy and to provide early intervention. All pupils are set challenging targets and the majority remember what they are. Monitoring is rigorous, particularly in English. Records are presented clearly and staff can interpret them easily. Staff are using the outcomes of assessment well to inform their planning in English. There is scope for making better use of the information when planning mathematics lessons.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2007:

- improving the quality of teaching and learning - satisfactory
- reviewing the class groupings across the school - good
- setting challenging targets and rigorously monitoring pupils' progress towards meeting them - good

### Leadership and management

The acting headteacher gives a very clear lead and is well supported by staff and governors. A senior management team has been formed to steer development. Staff are single minded in their drive to raise standards. Subject leaders are playing an active role in monitoring standards and reporting to staff. Their reports are detailed and are particularly effective at identifying those who are at risk of underachieving. However, subject leaders have not been involved sufficiently in monitoring planning, observing lessons or scrutinising pupils' work in order to ensure that teachers make best use of the outcomes of assessment to plan learning.

The self evaluation document has been updated recently and incorporates a realistic and accurate appraisal of the school at the present time. The school development plan is closely linked to the outcomes of self evaluation and incorporates well focused time-related targets.

Governors are offering more challenge and performance management procedures are in place for everyone. All staff have opportunities to attend training to meet their professional development needs. However, there is scope for teachers and teaching assistants to receive further training in mathematics in order to improve their subject knowledge.

Under the purposeful leadership of the acting headteacher, there is a strong commitment amongst staff, pupils and governors to sustaining improvement. Plans for the future leadership of the school are well advanced and include entering into partnership with a neighbouring school under one headteacher.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2007:

- addressing the weaknesses in leadership and management identified in the inspection report – good

#### External support

The local authority acted swiftly and effectively to support the school when it went into special measures. A project board was convened and has met regularly. Advisers have helped school leaders to produce a thorough analysis of standards across the school and to update the school's self evaluation document. Intensive support for mathematics and literacy has also been provided. It has been more successful in accelerating pupils' progress in writing than in mathematics. More targeted support is needed to raise achievement in mathematics and to improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good in all classes. Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing the priorities identified in the local authority's action plan.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- improving consistency in the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics.
- providing all staff with further professional development opportunities to improve their subject knowledge in mathematics.
- introducing more rigorous monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work.