

14 December 2007

Mrs J Moore and Mr I Young  
Associate Headteachers  
East Ward Community Primary School  
Willow Street  
Bury  
Lancashire  
BL9 7QZ

Dear Mrs Moore and Mr Young

**SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF EAST WARD  
COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Following my visit with Christine Emerson, Additional Inspector, to your school on 12 and 13 December 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 September 2006. 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

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

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, the Director of Education and Children's Services and the Operational Director of Learning for Bury.

Yours sincerely



Tony Painter  
Additional Inspector

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF EAST WARD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the third monitoring inspection: 12 and 13 December 2007

### Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documents and pupils' work. They met with the associate headteachers and other staff, groups of pupils, governors and representatives from the local authority (LA).

### Context

Since the last monitoring visit in July 2007, the governors have appointed a new headteacher who will take up his post in January 2008. The two part-time associate headteachers will maintain limited roles as consultants until July 2008. Three new but experienced teachers, one permanent and the other two on temporary contracts, have begun work at the school. The acting deputy headteacher has resigned and a further experienced teacher has been appointed to take her teaching role from January 2008. Two senior members of staff will also extend their management responsibilities by taking temporary assistant headteacher posts.

### Achievement and standards

The school's results in the national assessments for Year 2 pupils were significantly better than the previous year, particularly in writing, where results reached the national average level. Results in reading and mathematics also rose but to a smaller degree and overall standards remained significantly below average. However, the 2007 results in the Year 6 tests in each subject and overall fell further from 2006 levels, as expected, and were very low. These pupils had made significantly weaker progress through Key Stage 2 than the nationally expected rates of achievement.

Although current overall standards of attainment through the school remain lower than pupils are capable of reaching, pupils' progress is now improving. Better teaching is helping pupils to make good progress in many lessons. Pupils' work shows better quality, quantity and presentation. The school's assessment systems have been further developed to give an accurate indication of the rates of progress of individual pupils. This shows that almost all pupils are now making progress at least at a similar rate to that expected nationally. A significant number of pupils are doing better than this, indicating that the school is now reducing the legacy of underachievement. This is beginning to raise standards.

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

- Raise standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science across the school – satisfactory

## Personal development and well-being

Pupils say that they enjoy school because the work set is harder and more interesting. Consequently, they make a greater effort in lessons and take more care with the presentation of their work. The rewards for good attendance are popular with pupils and both attendance and punctuality continue to improve. School council members value the way in which they are encouraged to help the school to develop further. In particular, they are proud of their involvement in improving the outside play equipment. They note that this has resulted in better behaviour in the playground because pupils have more things to do. Pupils are motivated by the attractive displays of their work which are now evident in classrooms and corridors. As one pupil commented, 'This makes the school a nice place to be.'

## Quality of provision

Teachers have responded well to the effective programme of training and development established by the associate headteachers. As a result, teaching and learning continue to improve as teachers become more confident in implementing the agreed procedures. For example, teachers have adopted the revised marking policy and ensure that pupils understand what it means. Consequently, the marking of pupils' work now shows them more clearly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. Lessons include a better variety of interesting activities which are presented in a lively way. Teachers are making more effective use of resources such as the interactive whiteboards. As a result of these improvements, the majority of pupils are keen to learn and they contribute enthusiastically to class discussions.

Rigorous systems for monitoring teaching underpin the improvements in teaching and learning. These enable the associate headteachers to have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and to identify those aspects of practice which need further improvements. For example, the school recognises that, although the work set in lessons is now better matched to the particular needs of pupils of different abilities, this is an area which needs refining further. In particular, although the pupils now understand and respond to the whole-class targets which are set for literacy and numeracy, the use of individual learning targets is still underdeveloped. One area where assessment is being used well is to identify those pupils who need more intensive support in small groups to boost their achievement. The groups, which are effectively led by teachers or teaching assistants, are beginning to raise pupils' confidence and attainment.

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

- Improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching, focusing on what children are learning and their rate of progress – satisfactory

## Leadership and management

The associate headteachers have set out a very clear pathway to improvement that all staff are fully and willingly taking. The increasingly effective teamwork among staff is supporting important improvements in many aspects of the school. All staff

are very aware of their responsibilities to improve provision and ensure that pupils' progress is improved.

Substantial and accurate monitoring of teaching and learning is giving a clear picture of relative strengths and weaknesses. The associate headteachers have used this information to determine future priorities within the extremely thorough action plan. The high quality of their overview and understanding can be seen in the finely detailed plans to address aspects of the developments. Speedy and effective action has been taken to support and train staff where practice has fallen short of the clear expectations. This has ensured that all staff are making more effective use of the agreed policies and systems to improve provision and pupils' achievement. For example, planning and marking systems are now used consistently, although further improvements are already identified in using assessment to identify individual targets and to improve further the match of tasks to pupils' learning needs.

The governors' links with school continue to develop and many have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have used this effectively when appointing a new headteacher, aware of the skills and proficiencies that the school needs to maintain the momentum of change. Current plans to streamline the governing body's committee structure show governors' recognition of the need to maintain the higher level of monitoring that they have now established.

The team leaders' involvement in the leadership structure continues to develop. They are enthusiastically playing a greater and more effective role in leading improvements, although their role in monitoring the work of their teams is still insufficiently developed. Thorough and well considered plans for the new headteacher's takeover ensure the associate headteachers' limited but significant consultancy role until July 2008. This will be focused on specific aspects of the school's development and is also designed to support senior staff in extending their roles.

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

- Improve the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, including the role of the governing body as a critical friend – good

#### External support

The LA has continued to provide effective support to the school to maintain the increasing pace of progress. Although significant specialist support has been provided, there has been increasing attention to allowing greater levels of independence as the school begins to improve. Direct support for governors has given them greater confidence in appointing a new headteacher. Plans for the associate headteachers to give continued support to the school and new headteacher are thorough and effectively designed to allow a seamless changeover.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- The detail of further refinement within the original key issues is already clear in the school's planning and should be pursued.