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Mrs Dawn Solla  
The Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Solla

#### SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF BEAUMONT LODGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Following my visit with Carol Parkinson, Additional Inspector, to your school on 27 and 28 February 2008, 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 May 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.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report 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.

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

Yours sincerely

Pat Walsh  
H M Inspector

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF BEAUMONT LODGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the second monitoring inspection: 27 and 28 February 2008

### Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, including eleven lessons and a school assembly. They scrutinised documents and pupils' books, and met with the acting headteacher, the executive headteacher, senior staff, the chair of governors, a representative of the local authority (LA) and a group of pupils.

### Context

There have been further changes to the leadership team since the last visit. The headteacher resigned, and the acting and executive headteachers continue to lead and manage the school. The governors plan to make a permanent headteacher appointment in March 2008. The deputy headteacher left in December 2007, this post will remain vacant until the new headteacher has been appointed.

### Achievement and standards

The school now has a systematic approach to the collection and analysis of detailed information about the progress that pupils are making. The data indicates that, although the proportion working at age appropriate levels has risen, achievement and standards remain inadequate overall. This is because pupils in all year groups, particularly the most able, have significant ground to make up in English and mathematics. Standards in writing are particularly low as many pupils lack the basic skills of good handwriting and accurate spelling, and their work is marred by careless presentation. However, the attainment gap is gradually beginning to narrow because teaching is improving. Changes to Year 6 staffing have slowed the progress of this group, and indications are that standards are well below average. The school has responded swiftly and targeted additional support, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and this has halted the decline. The most recent summary of achievement in the Foundation Stage demonstrates that, although there have been positive changes to the provision, children are not making enough progress over time. The youngest children are making a satisfactory start from their low starting points, but this is not being developed in the Reception class where achievement in some lessons is unsatisfactory. Overall, the progress seen in the lessons in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 observed during the visit was usually satisfactory and, on occasions, good. The rate of the pupils' progress was directly related to the quality of teaching seen during the lesson. Work seen in books and around school highlights the need for teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve to be raised even higher.

### Personal development and well-being

Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are keen to learn and concentrate well in lessons, except on the few occasions when they have too little guidance and the activities are insufficiently challenging to engage them.

### Quality of provision

The improvement seen in teaching at the last visit has been maintained. The majority of lessons are satisfactory with some good examples. The main strength in teaching is the way teachers manage their classes from day to day and maintain good relationships with the pupils. The classrooms are attractive and work is clearly displayed. Teachers plan their lessons carefully, but the work set for pupils who learn at different rates is not always matched well enough to what they already know. This applies to all groups but especially to the higher attaining pupils. At times all pupils are given the same task with varying degrees of support rather than work which challenges them, teaches them something new or how to approach a task in a different way. Group targets are clearly displayed on classroom walls and pupils know what they are for. Some pupils say they are a useful reminder of what they are aiming for. However, many pupils are unsure about what their personal targets are and what they have to do to achieve them. This is because teachers have not explained clearly enough what the next stages of learning are for them. Marking has improved, but it is inconsistent from subject to subject and from class to class. The best marking explains to pupils what they have achieved and how they can improve their work but too often weaknesses, especially in basic skills such as spelling, are not addressed effectively. The school is aware that new marking policies are still to be evaluated. Teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation and basic skills are often far too low.

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

- improve teaching throughout the school, raise achievement and accelerate the progress of all pupils, especially the more able, and particularly in writing – satisfactory
- ensure pupils understand their targets and improve the quality of teachers' marking, ensuring that it shows pupils how to improve their own learning – satisfactory.

### Leadership and management

The acting headteacher, supported by the executive headteacher, has brought a clear direction and sharp strategic overview to the issues facing the school over the last term. She has worked effectively with a range of partners, including consultants from the local authority, to bring about change in the school. This has had a positive effect on teaching and learning, and assessment practice in particular. The school has benefited from the more stable leadership situation and this has led to greater levels of staff confidence and certainty. However, the leadership team lacks a deputy headteacher and this limits the opportunities to develop strategic planning at all levels, and places a heavy burden on the acting headteacher. The governing body is well underway with the appointment of a permanent headteacher, and there are plans that this will be followed in the summer term by the recruitment of a deputy headteacher.

The subject leaders for the core subjects of English and mathematics are playing an increasingly confident role in identifying areas to tackle and taking initiatives forward. They have led whole school training in target setting and audited reading resources and the provision for higher attaining pupils. They are beginning to plan and implement improvements in provision through, for example, some paired lesson observations and pupil work sampling. Other subject leaders are playing an increasingly active role in reviewing developments, although currently there is no science subject leader. The middle managers have approached their devolved responsibilities with vigour, raising their profile and strengthening their role in school. However, there is no strategic plan that maps out the overall monitoring and evaluation programme for the longer term and this means that key staff are unclear about how their own area of responsibility is to progress over time. The governors are well intentioned and plan to develop their role in holding the school to account. However, few were able to attend the organised training on assessment earlier this term and there is still no systematic approach to governor visits to the school to check on the progress being made.

The improved use of assessment data has begun to have an impact on raising standards, through identifying pupils at risk of underperformance and in need of more intensive support and intervention. The school's own monitoring of improvements, especially in the core subjects, has improved. The evaluation of lessons by the acting and executive headteachers closely matches those of the inspection team. Self-evaluation is accurate and realistic about the progress made and action required to improve further. A key development will be to build capacity within the school to sustain improvements and to rely less on external support. The impact of the work of the acting and executive headteachers, and the developing role of the subject leaders, particularly in English and mathematics, demonstrates that the school is making satisfactory progress.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in May 2007;

- strengthen senior management, build the leadership and management skills of all teachers, and adopt a robust approach to ensuring accurate self-evaluation and school improvement – satisfactory
- make effective use of assessment information to track pupils' progress, set meaningful targets for them and plan learning that properly meets their needs – satisfactory.

### External support

The local authority (LA) responded effectively to the points made in the last monitoring letter. Decisive action was taken, for example to secure the headship arrangements on a longer term basis. The school has welcomed the focused support from the Early Years consultant for improvements in the Foundation Stage, which has resulted in an improved curriculum and the better use of assessment data. Consultants from the LA Primary Strategy team have worked successfully with the subject leaders for English and mathematics to plan training and audit provision. The LA now needs to work with the school to support the senior leadership appointments in order to build long term capacity for the school.

## Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that teachers plan more accurately to provide challenging work for all groups of pupils that closely matches their targets for improvement.
- Evaluate the impact of teachers' marking in providing guidance for pupils to help them take the next steps in their learning.
- Further develop the strategic role of all middle managers so that they contribute more effectively to whole school monitoring and evaluation.