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19 March 2008

Mr S Kear  
The Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Kear

#### SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF WILLIAM PENN SCHOOL

Following my visit with Marcia Headon HMI to your school on 12 and 13 March 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 – good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers may 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 to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Children's and Young People's Services for West Sussex.

Yours sincerely

Christine Jones  
H M Inspector

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF WILLIAM PENN SCHOOL

Report from the second monitoring inspection: 12 and 13 March 2008

### Evidence

The work of the school was observed through lesson visits, scrutiny of documents, and meetings with the pupils, the headteacher, other staff in positions of responsibility, the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority (LA). The termly progress meeting between the school and the LA was also attended. Two teachers were absent on sick leave at the time of the visit. One class was covered by a long term replacement teacher and only this teacher was observed in a lesson.

### Context

The acting headteacher at the time of the last visit has now been appointed as the permanent headteacher. In addition the acting assistant headteacher, who joined the school on secondment to cover a maternity leave, has been appointed as the permanent assistant headteacher. The advanced skills teacher for curriculum development is still in post and a new teacher to cover this position is scheduled to be appointed next term.

### Achievement and standards

Standards throughout the school continue to improve. As a result of significant improvements in provision in the Foundation Stage, the children are reaching standards that are now above average, in keeping with their attainment on entry to the school. Current assessment information confirms that pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Standards at the end of Year 6 also continue to improve and remain overall above average. Pupils now make satisfactory progress from their high levels in Key Stage 1. The extra provision for able writers encourages creativity and contributes to raising their overall English standards.

Very good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and for those for whom English is not their first language is targeted at their specific needs and these pupils are making good progress.

### Personal development and well-being

Pupils approach their learning with obvious enjoyment and take a full part in all aspects of school life. Their behaviour is excellent and they are confident and secure members of the school family. This sense of family extends across pupils of all ages and older pupils take good care of younger ones. All speak very highly of their school and are proud representatives in external activities such as sports and drama. They continue to be avid, cooperative, good humoured learners, particularly where teaching is creative and stimulating. In one classroom that was turned into a

Victorian school, they hugely enjoyed dressing the part, sitting in silence and writing on slates - but just for one day! The youngest pupils get on well together and are engrossed in their learning. They grow in confidence through the many opportunities they are given to work collaboratively, in pairs and in groups. They thoroughly enjoy taking on different team roles and work successfully with others. This was exemplified in an activity where they were pretending to be fire fighters and each child greatly enjoyed taking turns in giving instructions to the others.

Current levels of attendance are not quite as good as in previous years but are still in line with national levels.

### Quality of provision

The considerable improvements the school has made to teaching and learning are directly improving the progress pupils make. Teaching is now good overall with much that is outstanding. Classrooms are very positive learning environments, and some engage pupils as soon as they enter the room. Planning for learning has improved significantly and takes account of pupils' interests as well as dealing effectively with the wide range of abilities in some year groups.

Assessment for learning is becoming well embedded into everyday classroom practice. Pupils' work shows that pupils are given frequent opportunities to assess their own and others' work. They rise to this challenge sensibly, both as givers and receivers of formative criticism. Teachers' regular assessments of performance are now giving a much clearer and more accurate overview of pupils' progress. This allows the school to address rapidly areas where achievement could be improved.

The curriculum now provides more interesting learning experiences. Topic planning is more appropriate to pupils' ages and interests. Older pupils were enjoying a topic on the rainforest and could argue the different points of view around challenging questions of deforestation, whilst younger ones attended the Victorian school enthusiastically. Curricular planning is now appropriately focused on strengthening and building on literacy and numeracy skills.

Provision in the Foundation Stage continues to improve significantly. Imaginative planning is thoroughly linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage programme with a good variety of activities that holds pupils' interest. The wide ranging curriculum gives good breadth and balance to pupils' learning in a way that pupils find relevant and interesting. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to explore and learn through role play and focused tasks. Provision now focuses securely on language, literacy and communications skills, for example good use of positional language. The improvements made to this stage are setting the example for the rest of the school to follow.

Pupils continue to grow and thrive in the caring atmosphere of this school. Assessment procedures and monitoring of progress are now well embedded in everyday working practices. Teachers now have a clear and realistic view of the progress of each pupil and can make effective judgements on where improvements are needed.

Child protection procedures now fully meet requirements.

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

- create a rich and exciting curriculum which matches the high abilities of the majority of children – good
- improve the provision in the Foundation Stage by challenging the children to think and make choices for themselves – very good
- ensure safeguarding procedures are in place – good.

### Leadership and management

The acting headteacher and acting assistant headteacher are now permanently in post. This has secured stability at senior staff level that raises the morale of all school staff. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future direction of the school in both the long and short term. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's work are rigorous and have had a considerable impact on improving the quality of education with teaching, learning, achievement and standards all rising. Leadership and coordination of subjects continue to improve through the effective grouping of subjects into three areas, each managed by a mixed group of staff and governors. This allows for weaker areas to be prioritised and given extra support as well as easing the burden on staff with multiple areas of subject responsibilities.

Accurate analysis of data provides a clear picture of performance and is used as the key to improving teaching and raising standards. Each pupil is given challenging targets and the progress they make towards them is tightly tracked.

The governors continue to give the school good support and are now much better informed about current performance. They know how much the school has improved and understand what still needs to be done.

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

- establish a secure leadership team which can work together effectively to bring about improvement and ensure all pupils receive consistently good teaching – good.

### External support

The local authority continues to help the school through implementing its effective statement of action. The headteacher continues to receive good support and appropriate challenge from the consultant headteacher and LA attached advisor. Other advisors have given support in areas such as English and mathematics. This has also been appreciated by the school and supported the increasing pace of improvement.

### Priorities for further improvement

No further priorities were identified.