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Mrs June Kershaw
The Headteacher
Woodcot Primary School
Tukes Avenue
Bridgemark
Gosport
PO13 0SG

Dear Mrs Kershaw

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF WOODCOT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Following my visit with Jo Curd, Additional Inspector, to your school on 4 and 5 March 2008, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in September 2007. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – 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 Services for Hampshire

Yours sincerely

John Seal
H M Inspector

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF WOODCOT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the first monitoring inspection: 4 and 5 March 2008

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, deputy head, senior managers, groups of pupils, the chair of governors, and representatives from the local authority (LA).

Context

Since the inspection, there have been significant changes in staffing. In January 2008, the school appointed a new deputy headteacher, teaching one of the mixed Year 3 and 4 classes, a mathematics manager who is also one of two new teachers for the mixed Year 5 and 6 classes, a new full-time teacher for one of the mixed Year 1 and 2 classes and a part-time music teacher.

Achievement and standards

Since the inspection, the Raise-on-line unvalidated results for 2007 confirm that by the end of Year 2, standards fell in reading writing and mathematics and were below average.

The validated results for Year 6 show that standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. Standards in mathematics and science fell. Although they improved in English they still fell short of nationally expected levels.

The school's recent spring-term analysis of pupils' progress across the school indicates that, although pupils in all year groups are making some progress, it is not enough. A significant proportion of pupils still remain below average in English and mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Pupils behave well in and around the school and have good attitudes towards learning. Attendance continues to be good. Pupils' enjoyment is only satisfactory because the level of challenge in lessons is inconsistent across the school. Pupils' insufficient progress in English and mathematics means that their economic well-being continues to be inadequate.

Quality of provision

The teaching observed was satisfactory overall. The effective professional training the school has put in place has improved teachers' subject knowledge. There is some good teaching but not enough to enable pupils to make up for ground lost in the past. As a result, pupils' progress across the school is patchy. Where teaching is good, pupils make good progress. Lesson planning supports exciting, relevant and practical lessons which motivate pupils to become interested in their learning and to work hard. They know what they have to do to improve their skills and teachers

direct them in how to achieve more throughout the lessons. However, because of the legacy of underachievement, too many pupils are progressing from low starting points and as a result are working below their expected levels. Teachers' planning is becoming more structured and consistent. There are clear learning objectives and pupils are given targets to improve. However, activities in too many lessons are not matched specifically enough to pupils' learning needs. Therefore, pupils are insufficiently challenged which hinders their progress. The school has developed suitable pupil-tracking systems which identify where individual pupils are in their learning. These are not sufficiently used by teachers in their planning to promote better progress by pupils.

There have been suitable changes to the curriculum with a more rigorous and organised approach to timetabling in order to cover the required subjects. More lessons are planned to take advantage of the school grounds and to use techniques such as role play in order to engage pupils more effectively in their learning. The school plans appropriate visits and has a good range of visitors to enrich the curriculum. Although many more practical activities are being planned to support learning, they do not always match the learning needs of the pupils to support them in making better progress.

The school fosters good relationships between pupils and adults and most children are happy. There are appropriate systems in place to support academic guidance but not all pupils are sufficiently challenged. Although most pupils have targets and learning objectives in their books, these do not always meet their capability. One pupil described how they needed guidance on how to attain higher outcomes than they had been given targets and work for.

Leadership and management

There have been many challenges which have demanded the headteacher's time and attention. As a result, there has been insufficient management capacity beyond the headteacher to maintain a clear and single-minded approach to raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning. With the recent appointment of the deputy head, there is now additional management capacity. The head and deputy work well together. They make an effective improvement team and can be seen to be having a positive impact on establishing the systems required to improve the school. Their accurate self-evaluation means they are clear about what the school needs to do to improve. With the further development of a leadership team with a clear focus on pupil progress, the school is well placed to make improvements. Good progress has been made in establishing systems for monitoring and evaluation of both pupil progress and teaching and learning but this has yet to have significant impact on achievement. The school is working well with the LA to support the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. Although there is a suitable school action plan for improvement, there is insufficient identification of expected outcomes for pupils. The governing body is beginning to engage more proactively as the school's critical friend. It has yet to demonstrate a full understanding of the issues confronting the school, for example, the rate of progress and level of attainment to be expected of all pupils. There is insufficient rigour, urgency or the capacity for the governors' strategic direction of the school with

regards to the required pace of change needed to raise pupils' standards of attainment and improve the quality of teaching and learning.

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

- Improve the pupils' achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, by raising teachers expectations – satisfactory
- Improve the use of tracking and assessment to set more challenging work – satisfactory
- Improve the quality and rigour of monitoring and evaluation at all levels so that improvement is more rapid and sustained – satisfactory
- Ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all groups of pupils particularly in English and mathematics – satisfactory

External support

The LA has a satisfactory action plan and has supported the school with appropriate actions. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in mathematics. For example, a leading teacher from a neighbouring school has been working alongside the recently appointed mathematics manager in monitoring and evaluating teaching. The LA has worked closely with the governors to improve their meetings and help them focus on monitoring the school's progress against the action plan. As a result governors are better informed. Regular monitoring visits are made to the school by the LA's District manager and school improvement partner to provide effective support for the headteacher and monitor the school's progress.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure all lessons match the needs of all pupils to ensure good progress.
- Ensure that all leaders and managers rigorously monitor and evaluate actions taken to raise the achievement of all pupils.