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Mr Mike Barnes  
Headteacher  
Fleetwood Flakefleet Primary School  
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FY7 7ND

Dear Mr Barnes

### SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF FLEETWOOD FLAKEFLEET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Following my visit with Peter McKay and Gillian Salter-Smith, Additional Inspectors to your school on 4 and 5 June 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 January 2008. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate.

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 Education for Lancashire.

Yours sincerely

Ruth James  
H M Inspector

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF FLEETWOOD FLAKEFLEET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 4 and 5 June 2008.

### Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, some subject leaders, a group of pupils, two governors, and a representative from the local authority (LA).

### Context

Since the last inspection, a new chair of governors has been elected. Three new governors have been appointed to fill vacancies, including one with previous governor experience. One vacancy remains.

### Achievement and standards

Results in national tests have been significantly below average for a number of years and the school has failed to meet its targets. Too few pupils have made enough progress to achieve the levels expected for their age.

The school now has in place reliable assessment procedures and robust systems for target-setting and for tracking pupils' progress. There are clear expectations for the progress pupils should make by the end of each key stage. Data from these systems provide a clear and accurate picture of pupils' performance. Unconfirmed teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils indicate a significant improvement in the numbers reaching the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Numbers likely to reach the higher levels remain low and suggest that many of the most able pupils make insufficient progress.

The school's assessments for current Year 6 pupils indicate that the proportion likely to reach the expected levels in national tests in English will increase, based largely on higher standards in reading. Standards in writing remain low for the majority. The school's assessments also show a decline in mathematics and a performance similar to last year in science. Again the numbers expected to reach the higher levels remain very low. The school's performance targets are unlikely to be reached.

The school has clear evidence that the rate at which pupils make progress is increasing in all years. However, the considerable legacy of underachievement, especially by those capable of reaching the higher levels, means that standards at present remain low, particularly in Key Stage 2 and in writing.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2008:

- Raise standards and increase progress especially in English and mathematics. – inadequate

## Personal development and well-being

The great majority of pupils show positive attitudes to learning and form good relationships with adults and each other. They behave well. In lessons they are generally keen to learn and participate in activities. Some, however, are content to remain largely passive and show little initiative in furthering their own progress. Where teaching is not very stimulating or engaging, a small number of pupils lose interest and can become distracted and restless.

Pupils who met inspectors spoke very positively about school, which they enjoy. They show pride in their school and expressed concern about occasional incidents of vandalism by outsiders. They feel safe in school and value the help and support they receive from teachers and other adults, including the learning mentor.

Attendance is below average, though just over half the pupils attend well. The school has prioritised the need to bring about improvement by giving the responsibility to a new learning mentor who is a member of the senior leadership team. A recently introduced computer-based recording system allows the attendance of individual pupils to be monitored much more closely. The school now has a good range of strategies to target intervention and support for pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern, often involving outside agencies. Those who attend well or who improve their attendance significantly are rewarded. It is too early to assess the impact of these initiatives.

## Quality of provision

There is a developing awareness of strengths and weaknesses in teaching as a result of increased monitoring by LA advisers and consultants, together with senior leaders. Good practice is beginning to be shared. In-service training and professional development, well supported by the LA, is helping to tackle weaker elements of learning, teaching and assessment, though progress has been slow. Inconsistencies remain in the quality of teaching across the school and there are too many lessons where learning is inadequate or no better than satisfactory, particularly in Key Stage 2. The proportion of good lessons is not yet high enough to ensure the increased progress pupils need to make to catch up on underachievement.

With the support of the LA, work has been carried out to bring greater accuracy to assessment, particularly of writing. The school has recently started to use its more accurate information on pupils' progress to identify individuals who are underachieving. This information has been shared with all staff and as a result, expectations of pupils' capabilities are beginning to rise. Teachers are beginning to use this information to match work in lessons to pupils' needs and provide suitable challenge but this practice is not consistent across the school. There are still too many lessons where pupils, especially the more able, are capable of completing more demanding tasks and consequently their progress is held back. Where tasks are planned to extend the more able they often require a greater quantity of work at the same level of difficulty rather than demanding greater depths of knowledge, skill or understanding.

Opportunities for pupils to work independently are developing but are still limited. Pupils carry out some research activities independently and examples of well planned group work that result in thoughtful writing were seen in one literacy lesson. However, in too many lessons teachers talk for too long and tasks are mundane.

Most of the pupils' work is marked regularly and this is an improvement since the last inspection. However, marking quality and effectiveness is inconsistent. Marking praises pupils for their work and effort and the best examples give clear guidance on how to improve. However, much of the marking does not give pupils a clear idea of how they can improve their work nor are they required to respond to teachers' comments and so they do not benefit fully from teachers' advice. The school is aware of the need to develop its approach to marking pupils' work and has plans in place to develop the policy.

Each class has targets for reading, writing and mathematics arising from an analysis of assessment of pupils' progress. Since the last inspection the tracking of pupils' progress has been used to provide every pupil with their own targets for writing. These targets are not referred to often enough in lessons to help pupils keep focused on what they need to do improve, especially in writing. The school is working on developing a common approach to planning. Most lessons have objectives, outcomes and success criteria. The level of challenge that these pose for pupils is inconsistent does not always help to accelerate learning at a fast enough rate. Time planned for pupils to write during literacy lessons is too often reduced because lesson activities overrun. The final parts of lessons are sometimes rushed and opportunities for pupils to reflect on what they have learned and what more needs to be done are limited.

In most lessons relationships between pupils and adults are positive, behaviour is good and lessons run smoothly. Electronic whiteboards are used effectively to stimulate learning and increasingly pupils are using them directly to develop learning. Teaching assistants usually work effectively with small groups to support their learning. On occasions they are not sufficiently well prepared by teaching staff and so pupils' learning slows down because pupils are not well supported. There is no overall plan in place to identify the opportunities for pupils to practice writing and numeracy skills through work in subject across the curriculum and consequently these opportunities are limited.

Pupils are well cared for and supported and the learning mentor works effectively to support pupils who come to school with difficulties. As a result of identifying underachievement a programme of additional support has been put in place to support reading, writing and mathematics. Those designed to support progress in reading have been monitored and have been successful in accelerating progress in reading in key Stage 1 especially and are now being used more extensively across the school.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2008:

- Raise teachers' expectations and increase the level of challenge in lessons by including more opportunities for pupils to work independently. – inadequate

- Improve the marking of work and use of assessment systems to plan activities that will accelerate pupils' learning and inform them how to make progress. - inadequate

## Leadership and management

The school action plan is appropriately focused on the key areas for improvement. Specific actions to be taken, responsibilities and timescales are identified. Success criteria are also included, although some of these are difficult to measure directly. A separate monitoring and evaluation timetable has recently been implemented and provides a clear schedule. However, plans are not yet having sufficient impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising achievement.

The headteacher, together with LA advisers, has undertaken a full audit of teaching and learning across the school. Although work has begun to tackle inadequate teaching, this has been slow and it has not yet succeeded in reducing the proportion of inadequate lessons significantly. LA advisers and consultants are providing much support to address weaknesses in teaching and learning including training and individual mentoring and coaching.

The senior leadership team meets regularly. The school assessment and tracking system has been refined and now provides a clear picture of pupil progress across the school. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) has undertaken a thorough analysis of this data to identify individual children who are underachieving, and there is increasing recognition of the need for swift and decisive action to improve the progress of this substantial minority. The Foundation Stage leader has focused on developing nursery provision which will help to ensure that children enter Reception with better skills than previously. She is beginning to become more involved in developing teaching and learning in Reception classes, but staffing difficulties in Reception have hindered progress and are not yet resolved. The Key Stage 1 leader is beginning to have an impact and this is shown in the improving progress and standards in Year 2. The headteacher recognises that raising achievement strategies and teaching and learning strategies require strong leadership especially at Key Stage 2 where there is currently heavy reliance on external support to secure improvement.

The senior leadership team has three non-teaching posts. The extent of the responsibilities planned for the new assistant headteacher who will take up post in September 2008 appear to be unrealistic given the substantial teaching commitment associated with the post. Subject leaders are not formally part of the senior leadership team but their roles are developing as they receive training and support from LA consultants. Their links with the senior leadership team are too informal to ensure regular and effective monitoring, or clear accountability for strategies to improve standards in literacy and numeracy.

The chair of governors meets the Headteacher fortnightly. New governors have visited the school. There has been one full governing body meeting since the inspection and the inspection findings were discussed. Governors recognise the need to raise standards. The curriculum committee has received a report from the

Headteacher on the school's current tracking data. This is helping to develop awareness, but governors still need support and training to develop understanding of pupil progress data which will enable them to ask more searching questions about the school's performance. An audit of governor skills and further LA training for governors is planned.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2008:

- Improve monitoring and evaluation procedures to gain a more accurate picture of what needs attention and to draw up precise action plans to eradicate underachievement. – inadequate
- Develop the monitoring role of the governors so that they play a more active part in helping the school to improve. – satisfactory

### External support

The LA monitoring and intervention team (MIT) has been involved with the school since summer 2007. Additional support has been provided by the school adviser, MIT advisers and primary consultants and the extent of LA support has increased significantly since the inspection. The LA action plan is clear and focused on the priorities for improvement. A summative evaluation group with LA, school and governor representation has been established to monitor the school's progress. Extensive LA support has been provided to the school in its drive to improve teaching and learning and so improve pupils' progress. At senior leadership level support has included work with the headteacher to streamline end of term data reports, support in drawing up job descriptions and planning a monitoring cycle and an assessment cycle. The full audit of teaching and learning throughout the school involved joint observations by LA and senior school staff. LA consultants have worked with subject leaders to gain an accurate picture of standards in reading, writing and maths. They have led staff meetings with all teachers to improve subject knowledge. Teachers have been supported to monitor and review the progress of children. This has included reviewing the targets for end of year attainment. The LA has delivered training for teachers on planning, challenge and differentiation. Additional training on using success criteria and learning outcomes to promote independent learning has been followed up with LA support for some teachers to make better use of these in their lessons. LA advisers have provided additional support for individual teachers to help them improve their practice. The effective work of the LA is starting to have more impact as staff begin to recognise the need for greater urgency and a more rapid pace of change.

### Priorities for further improvement

- Develop clear senior leadership responsibilities and accountability for strategies to improve teaching and learning and raise achievement in Key Stage 2.