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19 May 2008

Mrs C Prynne  
The Headteacher  
Upton St James Church of England Primary School  
St James Road  
Upton  
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Dear Mrs Prynne

**SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF UPTON ST JAMES  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Following my visit to your school on 7 and 8 May 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 November 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 Director of Education for the Diocese of Exeter, the chair of governors and the Director of Children's Services for Torbay.

Yours sincerely

Mark Lindfield  
Her Majesty's Inspector

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF UPTON ST JAMES CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the first monitoring inspection: 7 and 8 May 2008

### Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, analysed the school's data and met the headteacher, subject leaders, the chair of governors, a representative from the local authority, and the school council.

### Context

The deputy headteacher returned from secondment in January 2008.

### Achievement and standards

Progress based on first-hand evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of work and the school's assessments show that the levels of progress in Years 5 and 6 have increased in both English and mathematics. Most of these pupils are now performing in line with national averages but a significant number are still working below the levels of which they are capable. The rate of progress across Years 3 and 4 has increased recently but it is not as marked as in Years 5 and 6 and several pupils are currently working below age-related expectations. In the Reception class pupils are making good progress. Children with English as an additional language are given appropriate support and encouragement and make good progress as a result.

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

- accelerate the progress made in Years 3 to 6 to ensure that pupils do not underachieve – satisfactory

### Personal development and well-being

Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy school. They show a positive attitude to learning which decreases in the instances where the pace of teaching is too slow. They behave well around the school and at playtimes pupils of all ages show care and consideration for each other. Pupils are being encouraged to work and make positive contributions through the use of 'team points'. The school council, with the support of the headteacher, has an increasingly strong voice and pupils speak proudly of the changes and improvements they have helped to secure. There are an increasing number of opportunities for pupils to be involved in after school clubs and these are a popular addition to school life. Parents are supportive of the school and help to create the real sense of a 'family' school with good links with the local community.

### Quality of provision

Although some progress has been made in improving the quality of teaching in most of the classes, the unsatisfactory teaching has not been improved. Furthermore, the

progress to date is not yet sufficient to improve on the profile of the overall judgements made at the time of the inspection. Teachers do not yet receive feedback which is clear and precise enough to improve the quality of their teaching from satisfactory to good or from good to outstanding. A lack of consistency in the content of feedback is preventing more rapid improvement.

There is a greater consistency and reliability in assessment. Agreeing on the levels at which pupils are working in their writing has led to an improved focus on, and awareness of, what makes a good piece of writing. The process of setting assessment tasks which are then used to determine pupils' individual targets has helped to provide rigour and greater accuracy. Pupils are aware of their individual writing targets and, increasingly, they are using these to improve their work in English lessons. However, they are not yet using these targets in their writing in other areas of the curriculum. The school is now well placed to move from whole class targets to develop individual targets for pupils in mathematics.

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

- develop the quality of teaching so that there are no unsatisfactory lessons – inadequate
- improve the way pupils' performance is assessed and recorded, and make effective use of such information to set targets to raise standards – satisfactory.

#### Leadership and management

Subject leaders show greater awareness of their subject, have increased their understanding of the use of data in monitoring, and are clearer about their responsibilities. They acknowledge the positive role the headteacher has played in supporting them. They are now well placed to play a more active role in monitoring the quality of provision and outcomes.

Governors recognise the good support they have received from the National Leader of Education and his staff, as well as from the local authority. There is an increasing awareness of the part that the governors can play in moving the school forward. The reorganisation of the committee structure of the governing body has helped to clarify roles and to engender a sense of responsibility for individual governors. The headteacher and external support have helped to bring greater clarity to the governors' work, helped by the implementation of an annual review cycle.

The headteacher has a strong sense of purpose and has set a clear direction to improve the quality of education provided. Systematic monitoring of teaching and the progress made by pupils through observations, analysis of planning, and work scrutiny is beginning to improve the quality of teaching but, given the urgency of the situation, it is still too infrequent and the clarity of the feedback that teachers receive is inconsistent. The increasing use of accurate assessment data is helping to create a greater understanding of the progress being made by individual pupils. The school improvement plan addresses the key areas for improvement but does not yet give sufficient priority to tackling previously identified areas of underachievement in mathematics and literacy.

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

- improve the effectiveness of the leadership and management of subject coordinators and governors – satisfactory.

#### External support

The school has clearly benefited from the support of the National Leader of Education in terms of the improvements to teaching through visits made by teachers to see good practice and in increasing the effectiveness of the governing body. The local authority has provided useful pastoral support to the headteacher and has taken steps to ensure continuity for the school in this respect. Teaching consultants have provided valuable support to teachers in helping them with their planning and this has boosted their confidence. In order to increase further the rate of improvement, all parties must ensure greater clarity of communication and agree on the priorities for actions.

The quality of the local authority's statement of action is satisfactory. The date given of July 2009 for removal from special measures is realistic, although challenging.