

## PROTECT - INSPECTION

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Mr Mike Barnes  
Headteacher  
Fleetwood Flakefleet Primary School  
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Lancashire  
FY7 7ND

Dear Mr Barnes

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Fleetwood Flakefleet Primary School

Following my visit with Peter McKay and Alastair Younger Additional Inspectors, to your school on 9 and 10 December 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 January 2008. 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.

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 second monitoring inspection on 9–10 December 2008

## Evidence

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

## Context

Since the last visit a new assistant headteacher has been appointed.

## Achievement and standards

Provisional results for pupils in Key Stage 1 show that the gap between the school's results and national expectations closed considerably in English and mathematics, but few pupils exceeded national expectations. Unvalidated data for Key Stage 2 national test results in 2008 show that the numbers of pupils meeting national expectations increased compared with the previous year, especially in English and mathematics. The figures remain below national averages. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels remained very low, with fewer than expected numbers of pupils attaining level 5 in English, mathematics and science. These results reflect a history of previous underachievement.

Lesson observations show that teaching is improving and that alongside this, learning is accelerating and progress picking up. Pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress in most of their numeracy and literacy lessons. In lessons where good progress is made this is helping pupils to catch up and countering the legacy of underachievement. There remain a few lessons, however, where progress is less than satisfactory. The effectiveness of specific interventions targeted at underachieving pupils is improving. Overall, in all interventions, a target has been set for these pupils to make academic gains at a faster rate than average expectations to enable them to catch up; and about two thirds of those involved are currently doing so. Lesson observations indicate that potentially higher attaining pupils are often challenged insufficiently and that not enough is done to encourage higher aspirations, for instance by displaying their best work more prominently. Several older pupils are currently producing pieces of work demonstrating a good standard of writing that is worthy of greater prominence.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

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

## Personal development and well-being

This is an increasingly happy school, where pupils get on well together and with staff, behave well and show enthusiasm for learning. There are very few instances of serious misbehaviour and records show that there is a greater tendency for identified pupils to improve their behaviour than for it to deteriorate. Improvements in teaching have resulted in teachers becoming more perceptive to the moods of pupils and having the confidence to change their plans when they recognise some pupils are becoming restless. Nearly all pupils are keen; they listen to teachers, get on well with one-another and want to do well. On occasion though, higher attaining pupils show signs of complacency and settle for being 'top of the class' rather than aspiring to the highest possible standards. Pupils are leading increasingly healthy lifestyles, helped by improvements in school meals following the opening of the new kitchen. Since this event increasing numbers of pupils are eating healthy school meals in preference to packed lunches.

Attendance remains below the national average and is currently falling short of the target set by the LA. Many pupils attend well but there are a few persistent absentees. Work to improve attendance focuses strongly on this group through the work of the learning mentor, who works with families as well as pupils to reduce absence.

## Quality of provision

Teaching and learning are improving. Compared with the previous monitoring visit, the proportion of good lessons has increased significantly, while that of those judged to be inadequate has reduced. The school has made considerable efforts, with the aid of external support, to identify and eliminate weaker teaching, while also looking to improve satisfactory teaching to good. The success of this work is evident in a profile which shows that about half of lessons are now good or better. These actions have been founded on intensive and rigorous monitoring of teaching by LA advisers and consultants, senior leaders and subject co-ordinators. Regular lesson observation and scrutinies of work and planning give the school a clear idea of embedded strengths and areas for improvement, both of individual teachers and across the school. However, the best practice has not yet been sufficiently well shared and implemented to avoid the inconsistencies in teaching which remain as the greatest barrier to improvement. There is not yet enough good teaching to fully counter the legacy of underachievement from previous years.

A new teaching and learning policy has been introduced. While this is a useful statement of aims and principles, it does not encapsulate the school's shared view of what constitutes good teaching and learning. Consequently it is of less value as a working document to guide the planning and delivery of effective lessons. Neither does it set out clear expectations of teachers for which they can be held

accountable. The school does not use a standardised format for lesson planning to ensure teachers prepare lessons consistently to include agreed policies and practices.

Most lessons are planned to ensure progression in learning through clear links to previous and future work. Objectives are carefully explained, often enhanced by good modelling and demonstration using the interactive whiteboard, and pupils are well briefed about what to do. Planning to meet differing abilities and needs is improving, so most pupils are engaged on tasks and activities which challenge without inhibiting. Extension work for the most able, however, is too often more of the same and is not sufficiently demanding to take them to a higher level. Teachers use questioning to stimulate thinking and there are good opportunities for pupils to share and discuss ideas and opinions, particularly with talk partners. Increasingly there are opportunities for pupils, individually or in groups, to take decisions about and to evaluate their own and each others' work. Teaching assistants provide support which is helpful and challenging. Pupils' good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning underpin good relationships and create an atmosphere conducive to learning.

In the most effective lessons the pace is faster, there is a good balance of teacher and student activity and teachers use frequent checks on learning to move the lesson on at just the right time. Opportunities for pupils to think and act for themselves are routine. A sharper focus on meeting different needs ensures tasks, and materials are tailored more closely to the abilities of groups or even individual pupils. However, across the school an area for further development is the setting of more precise learning outcomes in terms of clear expectations for groups or individual pupils linked to levels of attainment.

Well established systems for assessment and target setting have been supplemented by a newly implemented and well conceived marking system. This is well understood by teachers and pupils but has yet to be applied consistently. In particular, there is a wide variation in the balance between the colour-coded highlighting used to indicate strengths or areas for improvement and helpful written comments. There is clear evidence that simple corrections are routinely undertaken as a result of highlighting, but overall there is too little subject specific comment on exactly what the next steps for improvement should be. While the new system of marking is valued by pupils because they feel it keeps them well informed about their work and about how they can improve, it is not yet having sufficient impact on improving rates of progress.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

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

## Leadership and management

Leadership and management are clearly focused on the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection in January and the last monitoring visit in June. The leadership team is now functioning as a much more cohesive unit in a stronger position to bring about the necessary improvement. Since the last monitoring visit the headteacher has developed clear senior leadership responsibilities and accountability for strategies to raise achievement and improve teaching and learning in Key Stage 2. The role of the deputy headteacher has been clarified and he is now much more actively involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work. He is also focusing on raising standards and achievement in science. Key Stage coordinators have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and are developing confidence in taking a lead in raising achievement and standards and helping to improve teaching and learning. The inclusion of the literacy and numeracy subject leaders on the senior leadership team is helping them to develop their leadership roles through their involvement in action planning and monitoring activities, and so to influence teaching and learning throughout the school. The whole school action plan has been revised to take account of changes in senior leadership responsibilities and now makes individual responsibilities more manageable.

The school is making good use of the advice, guidance and support of the LA. All of this has helped to focus teachers on what needs to be done to improve teaching and learning, and improvement in this is evidence of the impact of this work. There is more good teaching and less inadequate teaching. Standards are rising and there is evidence of more rapid pupil progress. The school has a clear plan for monitoring which is overseen by the deputy headteacher. This includes regular observations of lessons, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, and pupil discussions. Increased attention is given to weaker aspects identified and these are now followed up more rigorously. Appropriate support is provided to address weaknesses, both within school and from LA consultants and advisers.

New policies have been introduced, such as the marking and calculations policies, and the behaviour management policy has been revised. These help teachers to understand what is expected of them, although the teaching and learning policy is less clear. Changes to the delivery of mathematics lessons are helping to ensure that maximum use is made of lesson time, and that class teachers take full responsibility for the achievement of their pupils in this subject.

More reliable and regular assessments feed into the school's thorough pupil progress tracking system. This is now better used across the school to identify underachievers. Moderation ensures that teacher assessments are accurate. Interventions are delivered to accelerate progress of underachievers and school evaluations of these show increased rates of progress for many pupils. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) continues to closely monitor the performance of underachievers closely.

Many improvements have been made to the buildings which have improved the learning environment and encourage children to take a pride in their school.

Governance continues to improve. There is better understanding of governors' strategic role in supporting and challenging the school. New LA governors include individuals with previous experience of school governance. One parent governor vacancy remains. New governors have had training in their role provided by the LA, and are taking an increasingly active part in meetings, and asking pertinent questions. The chair of governors has regular meetings with the headteacher.

Although the school's capacity to improve is now stronger than before, the school remains dependent on external support, particularly with regard to improving teaching and learning. It is too early to judge whether improvements can be furthered and sustained over time, which is necessary to counter the legacy of underachievement.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- 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. - good
- 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 continues to provide good support to the school. Extensive support has been made available by advisers and consultants at different levels from headteacher and senior leadership level through to individual teachers and teaching assistants. Following the last visit the LA adviser supported the headteacher and deputy headteacher in revising and strengthening aspects of the school leadership. Consultants have worked with subject leaders on tracking pupil progress, undertaking question level analysis and reviewing and revising action plans to raise achievement. They have worked with teachers and teaching assistants to improve subject knowledge especially guided reading in English and calculations in maths. In both subjects teachers have been supported to assess the next steps in pupils' learning. Consultants have continued to work with subject leaders on a whole school review of standards and achievement so that there is an accurate picture throughout the school. The SEN adviser has worked with the SENCO to identify underachievement, decide on appropriate provision and monitor the impact. The EYFS adviser has worked with Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 coordinators and teachers on aspects of teaching including continuous provision in Key Stage 1. The LA has also offered human resources support in dealing with staffing issues, and advisers have raised issues relating to buildings and finance with other departments

when appropriate. The effective work of the LA is now having an impact as is evidenced by improvements in school.