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18 December 2008

Ms Sophy Blakeway  
Acting Headteacher  
Bursledon Junior School  
Long Lane  
Bursledon  
Southampton  
SO31 8BZ

Dear Ms Blakeway

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Bursledon Junior School

Following my visit with David Williams, Additional Inspector, to your school on 26 and 27 November 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 February 2008. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – 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

Linda Kelsey  
H M Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Bursledon Junior School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 26 and 27 November 2008

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, groups of pupils, two members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, the deputy headteacher and other members of staff.

## Context

Since the last visit in July, the headteacher and three members of staff have left the school. An acting headteacher has been appointed until a decision is made about the future leadership of the school. Three members of teaching staff have also joined the school and there have been additions to the governing body from experienced practitioners in leadership of other schools.

## Achievement and standards

Standards, in the most recent national tests, which have not yet been confirmed, are below average. They took a significant dip in 2008, with pupils not achieving the targets set for them. The number of pupils achieving the higher levels was significantly below average. Standards have been below average since 2006 because, historically, pupils have not been making enough progress in their work during their time at the school. Progress through the school has not been rapid enough to enable pupils to make up lost ground due to unsatisfactory teaching in the past.

The lessons seen and pupils' work books show that pupils are making progress because teaching has improved since the last visit. The school is beginning to realise what work needs to be done to bring about further improvement in teaching so that standards can rise. However, the better quality of teaching has yet to have an impact on standards overall or on the longer term achievement of pupils. Pupils have clear targets, both for whole groups and individually. Not all, however, have fully understood these targets, which do not yet have as great an impact as they should.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- ensure pupils make more rapid progress in writing and mathematics – inadequate

## Personal development and well-being

Most elements of personal development are now good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved since the previous monitoring visit. The behaviour of pupils was good in almost all lessons observed. In the few cases where any minor

disruption was observed, this was quickly and effectively managed by teachers. Behaviour in assembly and around the school site is good.

Pupils cooperate and collaborate very well with each other, for example, working well in pairs and small groups to discuss aspects of their work in lessons. Pupils have a more tolerant attitude to others, including those from other cultures. There was no evidence of racist comments, which were identified at the last inspection, and the underlying ethos of the school is one of care and trust.

Pupils say that they now feel safe in school, although this had not always been the case in the past. They also agree that behaviour is now predominantly good, although in a few cases pupils do not always focus sufficiently on their learning and become distracted. Attendance levels are broadly in line with national averages. One pupil has been excluded from school during this term.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- improve behaviour to eliminate instances of uncaring and disruptive behaviour, including racial incidents – satisfactory

### Quality of provision

The quality of teaching has improved so that more teaching is now satisfactory and some is good or outstanding. Lesson planning identifies what pupils are intended to learn as well as do. In many cases the learning objectives are clear and precise, but in a few instances they lack sufficient precision to enable teachers or pupils to be able to evaluate the progress they are making. Information gained from the assessment of pupils' work is used to help teachers to plan further work. In many cases this is effective, especially in ensuring that work is better matched to the needs of different groups of pupils. However, it does not ensure that work is consistently well matched to the needs of all individual pupils.

In many lessons teachers involve pupils in a range of activities where they learn through first-hand experience. The curriculum includes an appropriate range of subjects and the school's focus on raising standards in literacy is being supported well in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 3 use and understand appropriate technical vocabulary in their music lessons and in Year 5 information and communication technology is being used well to support language development. However, the school's current setting arrangements do not always ensure that work is consistently well matched to the needs of all pupils.

The quality of pastoral care is good and pupils feel that they are safe and well supported. Health, safety and safeguarding procedures are in place and secure. The school's systems for recording assessments enable the school to identify pupils who are at risk of underachieving. The marking of pupils' written work often identifies key areas for further improvement and pupils understand the significance of the comments. However, pupils are less confident in assessing their own work and are often over-reliant on feedback from teachers. In some lessons this is because there is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' learning skills.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- make better use of assessments and targets to guide teachers' planning and ensure lessons provide appropriate challenge and support for all pupils – satisfactory

### Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the school have improved as a result of the new acting headteacher's appointment. Her ability to unleash the talents and qualities of the staff has given a renewed vigour and confidence about how the school sees its weaknesses. Teachers have developed the confidence to be bolder with their lesson plans, and to plan more interesting and relevant lessons so that pupils are more motivated in their learning. Despite this improvement, and the consequent improvement in progress made by pupils in lessons, there has not been sufficient time for this to compensate for the inadequate progress made previously.

Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are stronger and are a shared responsibility and have enabled senior staff and subject leaders to understand where there are weaknesses and how these may be addressed. The governing body has continued to develop its strategic role and has welcomed the improved information about standards and progress. They now rightly challenge the school and, together with the local authority expertise, offer better and more consistent support to the school.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- improve leadership and management and ensure that leaders at all levels evaluate the school's effectiveness accurately and have a strong impact upon improving achievement – satisfactory

### External support

External support to the school is now adequate and an improvement from the last monitoring visits because the local authority has addressed the issues of weak management of the past. It has put in place systems to support the school in developing better leadership and management and improved capacity. As a result, the statement of action has been rewritten and is now more sharply focused on areas for improvement such as teaching and learning. This is having a positive effect on achievement; leadership and management of the school have improved; and the behaviour of pupils is better so that more can make the progress expected of them.