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20 November 2008

Mrs Diane Lawry  
Headteacher  
Waite End Primary School  
Mill Road  
Waterlooville  
PO7 7DB

Dear Mrs Lawry

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Waite End Primary School

Following my visit with Stephanie Matthews, Additional Inspector, to your school on 12 and 13 November 2008, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the third 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

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

Newly qualified teachers may 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's Services.

Yours sincerely

Gehane Gordelier  
H M Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Waite End Primary School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 12 and 13 November 2008

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, four members of staff with leadership and management responsibilities, two governors including the chair of governors, two representatives from the local authority and a group of pupils.

## Context

The new headteacher took up her post in September 2008. A new community governor has been appointed. Classes are now taught in single age groups although at times pupils are taught in mixed-age ability groups. At the time of the monitoring visit, two classes were taught by supply teachers due to the absence through sickness of two members of staff. At the start of this academic year, some of the teachers changed year groups. For example, the teacher who was in Year 6 now teaches Year 2.

## Achievement and standards

Standards, although still too low, are beginning to rise, but not consistently throughout the school. Standards in the Foundation Stage are rising, with an increase in the percentage of children working at a good level of development. The results of tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2008 indicate that pupils made particularly good progress in reading, attaining standards that are higher than average, but standards in writing were significantly below average. Standards in mathematics remained broadly average. The high standards in reading, however, are not reflected in the relatively low standards of reading for the same pupils now in Year 3. Recent tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 show that pupils made particularly good progress in English and mathematics, attaining standards that are higher than average in reading and mathematics. This is a direct reflection of the extremely good teaching last year in Year 6. The results for 2008, although much improved from previous years, highlight that too few pupils attain the higher levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

Since her arrival in September 2008, the new headteacher has put into place systems, which track the progress made by every pupil. This is leading to better use of data and assessment information by managers and subject leaders. Where teachers are making better use of assessment information, this is leading to higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. This in turn is helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, not all teachers are making equally good

use of this information to ensure the work they set is sufficiently challenging and meets the needs of all pupils.

The data the school now collects has enabled staff to set targets for every pupil in English and mathematics. However, the progress pupils have made towards their targets has yet to be reviewed. Some of the targets are not sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able pupils, and older pupils are not aware of their targets.

The headteacher has correctly identified the need to improve transition from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 to help raise expectations and standards for pupils in Year 1.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- ensuring that all managers, and teachers in lessons, make better use of assessment information so that pupils' progress is tracked more effectively, and work is set that challenges and meets the needs of all pupils – satisfactory

#### Personal development and well-being

Pupils are noticeably more enthusiastic about their school; they particularly enjoy learning that includes practical activities such as the science lesson taught by the supply teacher in Year 5. In this lesson, pupils experimented with tuning forks, ping pong balls, water and other resources to learn about the link between vibrations and sound waves. Pupils really value the range of clubs, trips and residential visits and are enthusiastic about sports activities and raising money for a range of charities. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is generally very good, but deteriorates when lessons do not engage pupils sufficiently and when activities are not well matched to their needs and interests. Pupils say they feel safe and secure at school because of the support from staff. They are very eager to explain the work the school council has done to make improvements around the school.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about Remembrance Day and the symbolism of the poppy. There are some good displays of artwork and work resulting from school trips but insufficient visual images to reflect the extent to which the school values equality and diversity. Furthermore, some aspects of social and multicultural education are underdeveloped. Pupils usually make healthy choices, although this is not always reflected in the contents of their lunchboxes.

Systems for improving attendance and ensuring parental support have been introduced, but the poor attendance and punctuality of some pupils remains a cause for concern because of its negative impact on their progress.

## Quality of provision

The school has made satisfactory progress in the key issue in this area, with significantly fewer inadequate lessons observed during this visit. New systems are in place for improving basic skills, such as the structured phonics programme. This new approach is helping to improve pupils' ability to read new and unfamiliar words and has had a significant impact in raising standards in Reception. However, there is insufficient focus throughout the school on developing the wider skills required in reading, including the pupils' comprehension. Support staff although of high quality, are at times limited in how effective they can be by unrealistic expectations or weak guidance and planning by teachers.

Where learning is most effective, teachers set out clear learning objectives. A range of activities take account of the differing abilities of pupils, but at times these are still not sufficiently well tailored to pupils' needs. Lessons typically included more paired and group work, with planned opportunities for pupils to share and discuss their views. Some teachers make effective use of information and communication technology (ICT), but the potential of interactive whiteboards to make learning exciting is still not being realised. Pupils are encouraged to work independently but too few lessons are sufficiently well structured to enable them to be as successful as they could be when working without adult support.

Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is improving. Individual education plans are becoming more useful and the quality of these documents is now being monitored. However, they do not always detail how objectives will be met. This results in missed opportunities, for example, for using practical work or ICT to help pupils grasp new concepts or to engage and motivate reluctant learners.

Most teachers mark pupils' work regularly and usually provide helpful strategies for improvement. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work and indicate their level of understanding. However, this does not happen enough during lessons and not all staff are using the school's agreed assessment strategies equally well. Only a minority of teachers make effective use of targets and assessment information to inform their planning. Similarly, too few teachers monitor the progress pupils make during lessons.

Although it was not a key issue for improvement, the school has made good progress in developing provision in Reception. Children are making good progress especially in areas of social development and in communication. Trained and qualified staff make sure that routines are established and that children are well cared for. There is a good range of stimulating activities both in and out of doors and children choose for themselves during purposeful play sessions. Teacher-led sessions are used to introduce letter formation. This is not monitored carefully enough to ensure that children are secure in their understanding of the shape of letters before they are encouraged to move on to joined up writing. Assessment of

children's progress in the Foundation Stage is thorough and frequent. This phase of children's education is well led and managed. There is a clear determination to develop routines and resources for the benefit of all children.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- ensuring that all teachers have a clear focus on how pupils learn best in lessons, including adapting their teaching to meet the varied learning styles of pupils – satisfactory

### Leadership and management

Under the good leadership of the new headteacher, the school has a renewed energy and vision. She has quickly gained the trust and respect of pupils, parents and staff. There is now a strategic plan in place, which details what the school needs to do to improve and how staff and governors will work together. As a result, staff have a better understanding of what is expected of them and are more sharply focused on learning and pupil progress. This has led to an accelerated rate of progress since September 2008, which is most noticeable in the Foundation Stage. The headteacher recognises the importance of reintroducing performance management to provide staff with clear targets to help to improve their practice and to enable them to contribute more effectively to raising standards.

There is a regular programme of monitoring and evaluation with subject leaders now reporting on progress and standards. The quality of subject action plans and evaluations is still too variable, although most now include clear information about strengths and areas in need of improvement. Good examples are evident in the evaluation of the phonics programme and mathematics. However, subject action plans do not provide sufficient detail about time scales or the intended outcomes for pupils of differing abilities.

The school has yet to build sufficient capacity among some of the senior and middle managers in order to accelerate the school's rate of improvement. Although most staff are now working more effectively as a team, not all recognise their role in contributing to whole school improvement.

The governing body is becoming increasingly effective in supporting and challenging the school. However, governors have not ensured the school is fully compliant with all statutory requirements relating to equality of opportunity and the disability discrimination act.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- ensuring that all managers conduct rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the impact of their initiatives, and that systems are in place to track their success – good

## External support

The quality and impact of external support for the school is good. In the light of all the changes that have taken place, the local authority has produced additional information about how it intends to support the school. This dovetails well with the school's strategic plan for improvement and is more closely aligned to the needs of the school. The school benefits from regular support provided by the local authority in a wide range of areas. This is leading to improvements in the way work in English, mathematics and science is planned and assessed. This in turn is leading to better teaching, particularly in these subjects, but not by all staff. As a result of the support provided by the local authority, the special education needs coordinator has a better understanding of her role and has become more effective in helping staff to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as those with a statement of special educational needs.

The local authority provides the school with helpful and detailed reports. These clearly identify areas of improvement and the areas that remain a cause for concern.

The school improvement partner continues to provide the school with effective support. This has been particularly valuable to the school during the transition period from the consultant headteacher to the new substantive headteacher.