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1 April 2009

Mrs Elaine Merriman  
Acting Headteacher  
Bursledon Junior School  
Long Lane  
Bursledon  
Southampton  
SO31 8BZ

Dear Mrs Merriman

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Bursledon Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 19 March 2009, 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 February 2008. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed provided the school can demonstrate that it can give appropriate support to their development in the school.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

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 for Hampshire

Yours sincerely

Linda Kelsey  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Bursledon Junior School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 19 March 2009

## Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work; scrutinised documents; and met with the executive headteacher, acting headteacher, the coordinator for special education needs (SENCO), pupils at lunchtime and a representative from the local authority.

## Context

The substantive headteacher resigned from the post in the autumn term. An experienced acting headteacher of an outstanding junior school was seconded to the school for the autumn term 2008. In January, a very experienced deputy headteacher from an outstanding primary school was seconded to lead the school. The current acting headteacher is being supported by an executive headteacher for one day a week.

The mathematics subject leader and SENCO are currently absent from the school. However, the acting headteacher is taking overall responsibility for mathematics. The responsibilities of the SENCO have been distributed between the acting headteacher, deputy headteacher and the SENCO from the infant school.

There are plans to appoint a headteacher from September 2009. The process of federating the school with Bursledon Church of England Controlled Infant School has been put out for public consultation.

## Achievement and standards

The Key Stage 2 results in 2008 were lower than the previous two years in every subject at Levels 4 and 5. They were also below national and county averages and the school failed to reach its targets.

Pupils' achievement through the school is satisfactory overall because the progress pupils are making at the top end of the school is now good and has started to improve rapidly since the last monitoring visit, owing to teaching being consistently good across these classes. In both English and mathematics, standards are likely to be higher than last year and closer to national averages overall as a result of the better progress pupils are making. In English, progress in the past has been hampered by weaker and unsatisfactory teaching. Standards in writing are predicted to be lower than those for reading this year. Too few pupils reach the higher levels of achievement in English and mathematics. However, mathematics and reading are closer to national averages and achievement for reading is likely to be in line with the national average.

Across the remainder of the other year groups, there is strong evidence in the schools' data, pupils' work and class lessons that pupils are making better progress than before and that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are also making the progress expected of them. In lessons seen, pupils made good progress because of the better use of assessment, planning for individual needs and the targeting of pupils who need additional support. Pupils now know their individual targets and are aware of the next stages of learning because there is good marking of work. These are all contributing to the better progress being made.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

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

### Personal development and well-being

Although personal development and well-being were not a focus of this visit, lesson observations show that the majority of pupils are working well. Pupils are enthusiastic learners, are mostly on task for more of the time and respond well to their teachers and support assistants. They are generally much more attentive in lessons. Pupils are happy to discuss their learning with each other, work well in peer groups and then share what they have learnt with the rest of the class. Pupils are well behaved around the school and at lunchtimes, when they sit in mixed age groups and get along well with each other. The behaviour and attitude at the top of the school are excellent, with most pupils sustaining concentration for long periods of time.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

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

### Quality of provision

In all the lessons seen, teaching was good and workbooks indicate that teachers mark work thoroughly, give detailed feedback to pupils and make suggestions about how they can improve. Targets for improvement are now clear to pupils and are clearly set out in English and mathematics. Pupils get clear guidance about how to behave and how to work well in the classroom. There are good structures to lesson planning and the pace of learning is better. Teachers question pupils' understanding and clear lesson objectives are set which focus on what pupils are expected to achieve.

Although it was not a focus of this visit, curriculum coverage is now better in English and mathematics, as illustrated in workbooks. All aspects in mathematics are taught on a regular basis and pupils are now being involved in assessing their own work or that of their friends. Care for and welfare of all groups are still a high priority for the school and safeguarding procedures are in place. There are named child protection

officers and first-aiders. The school is knowledgeable about its vulnerable pupils and knows individual children well.

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 – good

### Leadership and management

Leadership has strengthened with the appointment of an acting headteacher for two terms. The executive headteacher is in school one day a week to monitor the overall progress the school is making. Subject coordinators for English and mathematics now have a clearer grasp of the progress pupils are making and are carefully analysing the current standards and making accurate predictions about how well pupils will do in the tests during the summer term.

Processes are in place to monitor the quality of the teaching and learning through scrutiny of lesson planning, pupils' workbooks and direct observations of teaching by senior managers and the coordinators for English and mathematics. Additional monitoring reports from the local authority and the School Improvement Partner focus on how well the school is doing in relation to its action plan. The action plan has been updated to take account of future developments for the school.

The school is considering federation with the infant school when a full-time headteacher of the federation will be appointed. This is likely to be from September 2009 but there is still some uncertainty about the process because it is at consultation stage. Governors continue to monitor the progress the school is making through its committee structure and regular meetings. They now have a clearer picture of how well the school is doing and receive regular up-to-date information from the headteacher. As a result, they are in a better position to hold the school to account and report back on how well the school is doing.

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 – good

### External support

External support for the school is good and is having an impact on improving the teaching and learning, behaviour of pupils and overall management of the school. The regular monitoring visits by the local authority are helping the school to focus on its continuing weakness in the standards pupils are achieving by the time they leave Key Stage 2.

The school uses the advice and good expertise of a range of other partners. These include outreach support, educational psychologists, social care, specialist nurses, advanced skills teachers in English and mathematics and behaviour support specialists. The executive headteacher, for instance, continues to provide support one day a week to the leadership and management of the school and to the acting headteacher. A mathematics consultant is helping to raise the profile of mathematics teaching across the school. The School Improvement Partner assists the leadership team in validating their judgements about teaching and learning. The local authority continues to offer support and advice in the consultation about federation.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- Take steps to secure the future leadership and vision for the school from September 2009.