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31 March 2009

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 to your school on 24 and 25 March 2009, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the fourth 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 – good

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

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

Gehane Gordelier  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Waite End Primary School

Report from the fourth monitoring inspection on 24 and 25 March 2009

## Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, held discussions with staff and governors and talked to pupils.

## Context

The school now provides a breakfast club every morning before lessons begin. Two existing members of staff have taken on the newly created roles of home-school link workers. The school remains fully staffed and there have been no changes in permanent staff, although two of its members are still on long-term sick leave. The school has appointed, on a temporary basis, two new staff to teach Years 1 and 5. An advanced skills teacher has been appointed and is due to start working at the school in the summer term. The school has two new governors, one a parent governor and the other a local authority appointment.

## Achievement and standards

Managers and staff are now making good use of assessment information to track the progress pupils make in English and mathematics. However, this has yet to be done as well or as thoroughly for science. Most staff are taking better account of information about pupils to set work that is more closely matched to pupils' needs. Although standards are still too low overall, they are rising more rapidly throughout most of the school. From Reception to Year 6, standards are rising more quickly in reading than they are in writing. While the overall progress children make in Reception is good, they make less progress in the development of their writing skills than in the other areas of learning. At Key Stage 1, there are more pupils working within age-related expectations in mathematics than in English. This is because of the significant gaps in their learning due to inadequate teaching of English in the past in this key stage. From Year 4 to Year 6, most pupils are making good progress in mathematics from very low starting points. However, there are more pupils working within age-related expectations in English than there are in mathematics. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs and learning difficulties and/or learning disabilities generally progress as well as their peers. However, too few pupils from Years 1 to 6 are working at higher levels.

Senior managers regularly review the progress made by pupils in English, mathematics and science. The school and governing body recognise that targets for the more able pupils could be more challenging, given the recent good progress made by some of these pupils.

Progress since the last visit on the area 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 – good

### Personal development and well-being

Pupils continue to enjoy coming to school and participate with greater enthusiasm in most of their lessons. They work well together and appreciate opportunities to work in pairs or as part of a group. The school has adopted a programme of work to support the development of pupils' personal, social and emotional skills. However, the content of the programme has yet to be fully reviewed to ensure that it is taught in a way that always adds value to pupils' learning and to their feelings of self-confidence. Social and emotional aspects of learning are taught particularly well in Reception, with teachers using fictional stories and puppets to introduce potentially sensitive issues.

The two home-school link workers are already making a positive contribution to the school's links with parents and the local community. However, it is too soon to measure their impact on improving the attendance of targeted pupils. Levels of attendance and lateness remain poor for some pupils. Those pupils who do not attend as often as they should are missing too much of their education and, as a result, are not learning enough or making the progress of which they are capable. The late arrival of pupils on a daily basis is not only unhelpful to their own learning, but is also disruptive to the learning of other pupils. The school is receiving good support from the education welfare service and, where appropriate, this has resulted in court action against parents who are preventing their children from receiving the education to which they are legally entitled.

### Quality of provision

The school has made good progress in improving the overall quality of teaching and learning. The vast majority of lessons observed were satisfactory; more of the teaching is now good and one of the lessons observed was outstanding. However, some weaknesses in teaching remain, but only a very small minority of lessons are inadequate. Staff have made a concerted effort to improve the teaching of wider reading skills and, as a result, pupils' ability to reflect upon and understand the content of what they are reading has significantly improved. Guidance provided to support staff is more helpful and enables them to utilise their skills more effectively. The support they provide is generally good, although the support for some of the older pupils is still not as good as it could be. This is limiting the progress of some pupils in improving their writing skills. Nevertheless, the quality of individual education plans has improved and these documents include more detailed information to guide staff as to how to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Teachers are making better use of information and communication technology (ICT) to engage and motivate learners. Pupils report that, when ICT is used in lessons, it



helps to make 'learning easier'. Although it is still an area for development, interactive whiteboards are being used more interactively. In the outstanding lesson observed in Year 2, pupils were practising division and some were using a programme on the interactive whiteboard to sort eight sheep into two groups of four by dragging and dropping the pictures of sheep into two separate paddocks.

Typical strengths in the teaching observed included a sharper focus on intended learning outcomes and the use of a wide range of strategies to support pupils' learning such as practical activities and group work, as well as visual and audio aids. Teachers work hard to make activities fun and exciting, and learning is put into a meaningful context. More teachers are now linking new learning with work already covered in other subjects or with real-life experiences. In a good mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils' work about perimeter was linked to what had previously been learnt in literacy and in history about the Aztecs. Teachers are making better use of questions to help pupils to develop as reflective learners. They are also making better use of questioning as a strategy to check pupils' learning. Most lessons are now well structured and include good opportunities for pupils to work together and support each other. In a good literacy lesson in Year 4, an enthusiastic and well-prepared teacher enabled all pupils to be successful in their learning. Pupils worked well in pairs, sharing and discussing ideas to create good examples of poetry. The pupils with special educational needs and learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the lesson made particularly good progress and were able to work independently and as part of a pair very successfully. All pupils were rightly proud of their work and keen to share their poems with the class.

Where teaching is less successful, teachers do not maintain a sufficient overview of the progress and level of engagement of all pupils. They are not responsive enough to the unexpected needs of pupils and, at times, do not provide them with sufficient structures to feel confident or be successful when working independently. A common weakness in most lessons, even those judged to be at least satisfactory, are the missed opportunities for pupils to write or make jottings. This limits the progress pupils make and also results in missed opportunities for pupils to contribute more fully to discussions. Although teachers are trying to provide more challenge for pupils, this rarely includes raising the level of expectation of subject-specific knowledge, understanding and skills. Consequently, extension and enrichment activities rarely lead to pupils working at a higher level within a subject. Extension work tends to put too much emphasis on an activity than on what pupils could be learning to help them to attain higher levels. The quality of teachers' marking has improved and is more consistent throughout the school. Teachers are also beginning to make better use of assessment to help them judge and record pupils' progress. However, there are insufficient systems in place for older pupils to take more responsibility for their learning, and opportunities are missed for pupils to use checklists to help them to monitor the progress they are making.

Progress since the last visit on the area 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 – good



## Leadership and management

Under the clear and strong leadership of the headteacher, the school has made good progress. This, in turn, is leading to rising standards and improvements to the overall quality of education that pupils receive at the school. The headteacher is well supported by an effective senior leadership team and together they have rebuilt a staff who now work well together as team and who feel valued. Middle managers are beginning to contribute more to their areas of responsibility, for example by producing evaluations for their subject areas. The headteacher provides the governing body with detailed reports about the progress of the school, which have raised governors' awareness and expectations of the level and quality of information they should receive. The school has developed a helpful three-year strategic plan to help it progress towards being removed from special measures as quickly as possible. The plan also clarifies how the school aims to improve even further beyond that point. Governors have now drafted their own improvement plan which details important actions that need to be taken.

However, there is still an over-reliance on too few people, both in the school and the governing body, to help drive improvement. Although they are developing their roles satisfactorily, not enough middle managers, subject leaders or governors are contributing as well as they should to monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's work. Where reports are produced by middle managers, subject leaders and governors, too few of these include actual reference to standards or the progress made by different groups. Consequently, the knowledge and understanding of how well pupils are performing in too many areas of the school is not yet sufficiently well known. Together with the slow rate of progress made by the governing body in addressing outstanding issues, for example those relating to statutory duties, this is limiting the school's ability to demonstrate its capacity to sustain improvement.

Progress since the last visit on the area 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 – satisfactory

## External support

The overall quality of external support for the school provided by the local authority continues to be good. The amount of external support has decreased in recognition of the school's improvement in key areas and its increasing ability to support itself. Reports to the school have helped to encourage and guide staff and have remained appropriately focused on areas in need of improvement. The school has benefited from good support provided by the local authority's education welfare, personnel and occupational health departments.