

Cambridge Education  
Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

T 08456 40 40 40  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 01223 578500  
Direct F 01223 578501  
[risp.inspections@cam-b-ed.com](mailto:risp.inspections@cam-b-ed.com)



20 April 2009

Mrs T Caputa  
Headteacher  
Oak Tree Primary School  
Jubilee Way North  
Mansfield  
Nottinghamshire  
NG18 3PJ

Dear Mrs Caputa

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Oak Tree Primary School

Following my visit with Nigel Grimshaw AI to your school on 18-19 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 December 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 – satisfactory

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 Education for Nottinghamshire.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Oak Tree Primary School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 18-19 March 2009

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, groups of pupils, four governors including the chair and a representative from the local authority.

## Context

Since the last monitoring inspection one teacher has changed from full-time to part-time employment at the school. The deputy headteacher, who previously was not class based, has taken on the additional teaching responsibility. Currently, one teacher is absent through illness and pupils have been allocated to other classes.

## Achievement and standards

Since the previous monitoring inspection, the school's 2008 end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments have been published. The data confirm that standards were significantly higher than in 2007. Although the 2008 end of Key Stage 2 test results remain unvalidated, they show that standards rose considerably from 2007 in all subjects. The 2007-08 contextual value added data showed that pupils' progress had also improved. However, mainly because of pupils' very low starting points and the continuing legacy of underachievement, standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2008 remained below average and the proportion of pupils who reached the higher levels was exceptionally low.

Since the last monitoring inspection, standards and achievement have continued to rise in most year groups. The school's tracking data show that there is an increasing proportion of pupils who are reaching the levels expected for their age. Standards in the current Year 6 are lower than the previous cohort because the starting points of the pupils when they entered the school were considerably lower. Inspection evidence shows that just over one half of the pupils in Year 6 are on track to achieve the expected level by the time of the 2009 end of Key Stage 2 tests.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Raise achievement across Key Stage 1 and 2 so that more pupils are able to reach nationally expected levels by the time they leave school – satisfactory.

## Personal development and well-being

Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons. They behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning. Increasing numbers of pupils are learning how to evaluate their own learning in lessons. They do this sensibly and maturely, and happily

discuss their learning with teachers and other pupils. Attendance levels are rising and the vast majority of pupils come to school regularly. However, despite the best efforts of the school, the poor attendance of a very small number of pupils continues to have a negative impact on overall attendance levels.

### Quality of provision

The school's monitoring records, local authority reports and inspection evidence show that the quality of teaching and learning continues to improve. The school has successfully identified those areas where there was weaker teaching and has taken necessary action. During the monitoring inspection, the quality of teaching and learning varied from satisfactory to outstanding. However, because many pupils, even in Key Stage 2, do not have basic literacy and numeracy skills, the proportion of lessons which is good or better is still too low to bring about a rapid rise in pupils' achievement.

In all Key Stages lessons are calm and orderly, and relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Teachers have become more aware that the most able pupils are capable of harder work and are beginning to challenge them more effectively, especially through the rigorous use of questioning. The school has instigated many initiatives to raise the achievement of the more able pupils. For example, the roles of the teaching assistants in some lessons have been changed to provide challenge for the higher attaining pupils. On some occasions, the more able pupils are given additional help and support by the teachers outside of their normal lessons. However, the initiatives have not yet been in place long enough to have a significant impact on pupils' achievement.

The use of assessment information to match work to pupils' abilities is becoming an established part of teachers' planning. At the start of all lessons, teachers communicate to the pupils what they are required to learn. Where learning is most effective, the learning outcomes are highly focused, closely matched to pupils of all abilities and the small steps which help ensure effective learning are planned carefully. However, there continues to be some lessons where this does not occur and consequently, some pupils, especially the more able are still not challenged well enough.

Pupils say that they enjoy the variety of curriculum activities, especially when they are involved in practical work. Although there are some instances when links are made between subjects, opportunities are not always taken to improve upon pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills in all areas of the curriculum.

The quality of teachers' marking has improved considerably. There are many examples of very effective marking which show a clear link to the lesson's objectives and give pupils good guidance on how to improve. Pupils say that teachers' marking helps them to learn more effectively. There has also been a significant improvement

in the quality of pupils' short-term targets. In a greater number of lessons there are clear links to the lesson objectives which are in turn reinforced in the marking.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure teachers make better use of assessment to plan steps in pupils' learning more effectively and thus better support their progress – satisfactory.
- Develop academic guidance so that pupils have a better understanding of how to improve their work – good.

### Leadership and management

The headteacher's drive to raise standards and achievement has been unrelenting. Through the improved processes for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, the headteacher has gained a much more detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and uses the information to hold teachers to account for the progress made by the pupils. Leaders at all levels are much clearer about their roles and responsibilities. They work effectively together and support each other very well. All leaders use the assessment information much more rigorously to monitor pupils' progress. However, the data are not yet used carefully enough to evaluate the progress of groups of pupils, such as the more able, or to evaluate the effect new initiatives have on pupils' achievement. Governors are steadily developing their roles in school, visiting lessons and talking with pupils and staff. Their skills of holding the school to account for the achievement of pupils continue to develop.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Carry out rigorous and thorough checks on the school's performance to bring about school improvement at all levels – satisfactory

### External support

The headteacher is keen to acknowledge the good support the school has received from the local authority. Consultants and improvement advisers have provided helpful advice on all aspects for improvement. Links with a local school have proved to be successful, providing both headteachers with opportunities for professional dialogue and exchange of ideas.

## Priorities for further improvement

- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching by ensuring that in all lessons learning outcomes are highly focused, closely matched to pupils of all abilities and the small steps which help ensure effective learning are planned carefully.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels use the assessment information more carefully to monitor the progress of all groups of pupils, especially the more able, and evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives on pupils' achievement.