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11 March 2009

Mrs Julie Hall  
Mundford Church of England Primary School  
St. Leonards Street  
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Dear Mrs Julie Hall

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Mundford Church of England Primary School

Following my visit with Brian Oppenheim, Additional Inspector, to your school on 10 and 11 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 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 – satisfactory.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

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 Diocese of Norfolk, the chair of governors and the Director of Children's Services for Norfolk.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Cousins

Additional Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Mundford Church of England Primary School.

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 10 and 11 March 2009.

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, evaluated teaching and learning in all year groups, scrutinised documents, the outcomes from a questionnaire sent to parents this term and met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, mathematics, literacy, special educational needs coordinators and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, two groups of pupils, the Chair of Governing Body and another governor and two representatives from the local authority.

## Context

No significant changes have occurred to the school since the last visit and staffing is stable with one temporary teacher. The school continues to be part of the local authority 'Improving Schools Partnership'. The deputy headteacher has had more time to spend on developing the leadership of the school with the headteacher.

## Achievement and standards

Pupils' achievement is improving satisfactorily. In lessons seen progress is satisfactory. Observations show that pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy develop appropriately because staff use demonstration and explanation thoughtfully. Practical activities carefully promote pupils' understanding of key ideas. An analysis of the tracking system shows that since July 2008, in reading, writing and mathematics most pupils in Year 3 to 6 achieve satisfactorily or better. However, progress in Year 4 is a little slower than expected in reading and writing. Progress in mathematics is consistently improving. In Years 3 to 6 over the last six months it has been at least satisfactory.

While standards in Year 6 in reading and writing are broadly average, a slightly smaller proportion of pupils than expected are working at higher levels of attainment. Standards in mathematics in Year 6 are still a little below average due to a legacy of underachievement and fewer than expected pupils working at the higher levels. A significant improvement is in the tracking system which shows pupils' standards as well as progress in each year group. This enables the school's leadership to monitor both aspects successfully as pupils move through each year group. The school is starting to track pupils' attainment in science successfully but this has not been in use long enough to have a full impact on standards in Year 6 and so they are below expectations.

In Years 1 and 2 pupils' progress is satisfactory in reading, writing and mathematics due to the sound development of basic skills. This means that standards are broadly

average in Year 2. Recent, spring term assessments are encouraging and progress is more consistent this year. This is partly because staffing is more stable in the school.

A significant proportion of children enter school with levels of knowledge which are below those expected in literacy and numeracy, but they are making good progress in Reception. Most children are in line to attain average standards by the start of Year 1.

Meetings are held each term between the headteacher, subject leader and class teacher to celebrate effectively pupils' progress. Those who are underachieving are identified and extra support is now in place. A few pupils identified astutely by the school for extra support will be offered one to one tuition in mathematics. The proportion of pupils who are expected to make satisfactory or better progress each year has been agreed methodically in reading, writing and mathematics for each year group and class. Further meetings are planned to monitor pupils' progress rigorously at the end of the spring term.

### Judgement

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- increase the rate of pupils' progress throughout the school and especially in mathematics - *satisfactory*.

### Personal development and well-being

Pupils' self-esteem is good because the school's leadership gives this a high priority. For example, assemblies are used more consistently to develop their understanding of how they have been successful in their work and pupils really value the awards given for good work. Pupils feel personal targets in reading, writing and mathematics are useful. One pupil summed it up by saying, 'they help you to learn a bit more and you make more effort because of the targets'. One or two pupils said staff do not often refer to their targets in lessons. Pupils do not often set their own targets using next steps guidance and feedback from staff. They rarely inform teachers if they think they have met their personal target. This means that they are not fully involved in self-evaluating their skills and the next steps they could take to improve. They really like the rewards and stickers given for effective work and behaviour throughout the week. In lessons and around school behaviour is good because staff support pupils well. They feel safe in school and effectively cared for by staff. Pupils consider others' beliefs deeply and develop their knowledge of multi-cultural societies suitably. For example, they learn about the beliefs of Hindus appropriately due to the good use of resources. Pupils raise money successfully for a range of local and national charities. Their knowledge of global issues is not fully developed but the school's leadership plans to develop this in the near future.

### Quality of provision

Teaching and learning are improving satisfactorily. Staff now use learning objectives consistently across the school and, as a result, pupils are clear about what is

expected. For example, in a good science lesson seen pupils in Reception learned to identify shiny objects because the teacher explained carefully how to test different materials using light from a torch. The teachers' expectations of pupils to record their results effectively and work independently were clearly outlined. This allowed pupils to confidently draw sets of objects which were shiny or not. In some lessons, teachers provide pupils with criteria against which they can evaluate their success and use these at the start of the lesson to set clear expectations and at the end to check learning. Where this happens, learning is well focused and pupils make brisk progress. This is not a feature of all lessons, however, and in some cases staff still miss opportunities to get pupils to show what they have learned.

Lessons are mostly planned carefully so that work challenges pupils. In good lessons a broad range of teaching styles and brisk pace mean that pupils are interested and engaged in their work, and enjoy learning. Assessment is now being used more consistently to ensure that pupils who are underachieving are given the help they need to improve their work and make sufficient progress. Additional work for the more able pupils in the class is planned but it is not always clear which pupils are expected to achieve these extension activities and occasionally these are not sufficiently challenging. This means that in a few lessons more able pupils could be stretched further so that they work regularly at higher levels of skill.

Teaching assistants are allocated to each classroom and work closely with the class teacher. This supports pupils' learning well. They have a good understanding of pupils' capabilities and know who and when to support. In some lessons, teaching assistants are involved effectively with assessing pupils' learning and use this information to help teachers plan their lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well and their progress is tracked vigilantly. The special needs coordinator watches over these children's progress and ensures that they have suitable support programmes.

Targets in English and mathematics are an established part of the schools' work. They are displayed in classrooms and shown in pupils' work books. As a result, most pupils know their class or group target. They have a good understanding of the system for achieving their targets and feel they are challenging. Some commented that targets were not referred to in marking and the books seen during this monitoring inspection showed that there is not a strong link between the two. Nevertheless, marking is regular and attention is paid to presentation. Comments are encouraging and help pupils to develop their understanding but do not consistently identify how to build on and improve their work. These factors mean that opportunities are missed to give pupils clear guidance about how to achieve their targets and take learning to the next level.

### Judgement

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school and particularly teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics- *satisfactory*.



## Leadership and management

The leadership of the school is developing satisfactorily. The deputy headteacher has valuable time each week to work with the headteacher and plan improvements. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together well and form a strong leadership team. For instance, they analyse pupils' progress in every year group carefully. School improvement planning focuses effectively on areas identified for development at the last inspection. Areas for improvement outlined during the last monitoring visit have been successfully addressed. For example, the role of the deputy headteacher has been enhanced significantly and extra financial support has been used astutely. The school is thinking carefully about the future and ways that the headteacher and deputy headteacher can drive improvement to the quality of learning because they have time to reflect more deeply and use self-evaluation more effectively.

Throughout the school self-evaluation is improving suitably and so leadership at all levels is growing steadily. This means that the subject leadership of literacy and mathematics is improving appropriately because the leaders are more effectively involved in analysing standards and pupils' progress each term. Monitoring is used more thoroughly. For example, pupils' work in books is looked at carefully and feedback for staff is assisting them to develop the ways pupils set out their calculations. The quality of teaching is monitored successfully and feedback explores strengths and areas for improvement suitably.

Governors are supportive and fulfil their statutory duties. For instance, the child protection policy has been reviewed successfully. They are beginning to challenge the school more effectively but they do not have an in depth knowledge of how to hold the school to account in key areas of learning. Governors have a rather limited input into whole school self-evaluation.

### Judgement

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- improve the leadership and management so that leaders at all levels monitor standards and the quality of provision rigorously- *satisfactory*.

## External support

The local authority gives good support to the school but it has yet to have a full impact. Staff have undertaken successful training in how to monitor teaching and learning. The local authority has worked thoughtfully to support staff to give feedback which sets specific targets to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, teachers have not had the opportunity to work with an advanced skills teacher so that they can enhance their skill even more successfully. Assessment activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage have been strengthened as a result of the local authority checking that evaluations of children's levels of attainment are accurate. Further training for staff to refine assessment in the main school is going



on at present. Extra funding means pupils who are underachieving are supported more successfully and the leadership of the deputy headteacher has been considerably improved. Governors are more appropriately involved in performance management reviews.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- Develop lesson planning so that more able pupils are identified and extended more effectively.
- Enhance the role of governors to ensure that they have a deeper understanding of how to monitor and challenge the school.
- Improve pupils' involvement in self-evaluation so that they learn to consider what they have achieved deeply and might do to improve their work, especially with regard to their personal targets.