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14 July 2009

Mrs Kate Webb  
Acting Headteacher  
Winklebury Junior School  
Willoughby Way  
Basingstoke  
RG23 8AF

Dear Mrs Webb

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Winklebury Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 6 and 7 July 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 June 2008. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate

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

Christopher Parker  
Additional Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Winklebury Junior School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 6 and 7 July 2009

## Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with a group of pupils, the acting headteacher, two leadership consultants, representatives of the local authority, and the chair and vice-chair of governors.

## Context

Formal arrangements for federating with the adjacent infant school are at an advanced stage. A headteacher of the federated schools is to be appointed next term and will take up the post in January 2010.

A new acting headteacher took over the leadership of the school in May 2009. Two leadership consultants are working closely with the headteacher, and together they form the leadership team.

The organisation of teaching groups in Year 5 has changed considerably, with many lessons being taught to ability groups of relatively small numbers of pupils.

## Achievement and standards

There is a growing consistency in the progress pupils are making throughout the school. The considerable gap between those pupils who are doing well in lessons and those who are not is closing. This is because the organisation of Year 5 pupils into smaller groups has allowed teachers to better match the tasks they set to the abilities of the pupils. Pupils appreciate the increased help and support they are receiving.

Although progress in all of the lessons observed was at least satisfactory, scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that variation from year to year and from class to class remains. The school's thorough analysis of pupils' progress also highlights considerable variation. The incisive analysis conducted by the senior team now provides accurate and comprehensive information about every pupil. There is also substantial analysis of the progress of all groups within the school. This provides senior leaders with the information they need to bring about further improvement.

The effective teaching in Year 6 has resulted in a marked improvement in national test results. The yet-to-be validated results of 2009 tests show that standards in English are now broadly average. Results in mathematics and science are below average but have risen considerably from exceptionally low levels last year.

Progress since the last visit on the area for improvement:

- raise standards and improve achievement in English, mathematics and science – satisfactory

### Personal development and well-being

Behaviour continues to improve. Pupils are now very clear about rewards and sanctions and welcome the new arrangements. Attitudes to learning are changing and more pupils are showing a greater degree of application and concentration. The school is calm and there an increasingly positive atmosphere. As one pupil commented, 'It's less stressy!'

The senior team has increased the emphasis on pupils' personal development. Assemblies form a celebration of individual and collective talents and achievements. One assembly involved some of the teachers and pupils revealing their hidden talents and contributed to an air of growing confidence and increased self-esteem among the pupils.

Teachers are also exploiting opportunities in lessons to raise and discuss social and moral issues. For example, in a Year 4 guided reading lesson, the pupils discussed their feelings about apartheid, which had emerged from their reading of *Journey to Jo'burg*.

Steps have been taken to halt the slide in the rate of attendance. The acting headteacher is now inviting parents of pupils with below-average attendance to meetings to discuss the situation. Improvements are evident in some classes but not others. There are a small number of persistent absentees who are now the subject of work with external agencies to improve their attendance.

### Quality of provision

The acting headteacher and senior team have taken pragmatic and effective steps to improve teaching and learning in Year 5. By deploying teachers and teaching assistants to work with smaller groups of pupils, the school ensures that pupils have better opportunities to make progress. Some of the earlier underachievement is being tackled with a degree of intensity that was previously absent.

The impact of coaching and support for teachers can be seen in the improved organisation and methods used in lessons. Although coaching and support have enhanced the profile of teaching overall, teachers have yet to ensure that all pupils learn and make consistently good progress.

There is no longer such a stark contrast between the weakest and the strongest teaching, and more lessons are now good. Teaching assistants have benefited considerably from training in both managing pupils and contributing to their learning. They are now well briefed before lessons and keep good assessment notes of the progress of the pupils they are working with. The needs of pupils with

learning difficulties are now fully documented, so that teachers and teaching assistants are aware of the support they need. A wide range of agencies are now involved in providing specialist advice and support to improve the development and progress of these pupils.

The senior team has established a comprehensive tracking system that has now been implemented throughout the school. This makes use of a range of teacher assessment and test data. Very thorough analysis of this data has provided the senior team and teachers with a very clear picture of the progress made by each pupil. The marking of pupils' work is improving but some comments give too little guidance to pupils on how to improve their work and, on occasions, the teacher's comments are not followed up. The use of targets is developing but is not aligned with marking or with the information collected from the tracking of pupils' progress. Nevertheless, overall improvement in the use of assessment is good and current developments are generating information that will prove central to further improvement in teaching and learning.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- make better use of assessment to accelerate the progress made by pupils  
– good

## Leadership and management

The acting headteacher and leadership consultants have been successful in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Training, coaching and support for teachers and teaching assistants have generated common approaches and methods that are increasingly evident in many lessons.

Better organisation and management of procedures, and support for the least able and most vulnerable children, are raising awareness among teachers and teaching assistants of the specific needs of these pupils. This is an important step to providing the pupils with more specific opportunities to learn and make progress.

The acting headteacher's high expectations are proving infectious and are resulting in greater confidence and more positive approaches throughout the school. All adults are now expecting more of the pupils, who are responding positively.

The senior team is beginning to draw in phase and subject leaders, so that they can shadow the leadership consultants. The senior team has clear plans to develop the leadership skills of subject and phase leaders, so that they will be in a position to fulfil their roles when the local authority withdraws the leadership consultants.

The governing body is playing a central role in preparing for federation and ensuring that the school is in a strong position to benefit from this development. The governors are thorough in their approach to policy and procedure, and hold the school to account rigorously.

The senior team and the governors have made significant and important changes. There is now a clear direction for the school and improvement is gathering momentum.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- improve the impact of leaders and managers at all levels so that they make their full contribution to raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching and learning – good
- strengthen governance, particularly in monitoring the school's performance more systematically, so that governors can hold it to account – good

External support

The local authority has intensified its support. Settled leadership is now in place to take the school through to federation. In addition to a wide range of support from other schools and services, the deployment of leadership consultants is having a notable impact on the provision for the pupils.

The local authority is monitoring the progress the school is making through frequent visits. Support for the school is good and proving to be effective.