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24 June 2009

Mrs S Sweet  
Acting Headteacher  
Morley CE Primary School  
Deopham Road  
Morley  
Wymondham  
Norfolk  
NR18 9TS

Dear Mrs Sweet,

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Morley CE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 22 and 23 June, 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 – satisfactory

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 Norfolk.

Yours sincerely

Tricia Pritchard

Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Morley CE Primary School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 22 and 23 June 2009.

## Evidence

HMI observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher, staff, pupils, the chair of the governing body, the literacy governor and representatives from the local authority and the Diocese.

## Context

At the end of the spring term, one of the part-time Year 3 /4 class teachers and the Year 4/5 class teacher left the school. During the first half of the summer term, the other part time teacher in the Year 3 /4 class taught full-time pending the appointment of a new part-time teacher who started after half term. At the beginning of the summer term, a new member of staff was appointed to the senior management team and to teach the Year 4 /5 class.

## Achievement and standards

Children in the Reception class make at least satisfactory progress and often good progress in relation to their starting points. The recent assessments indicate that they have made particularly good progress in linking sounds and letters and in calculation. Their end-of-year profile scores show that they are working within the early learning goals in most areas of learning. Their emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world are the weakest areas.

Pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics has been an area of concern. Since the last inspection visit, the school's records show that most pupils are making better progress in mathematics than previously. Overall, their progress is now satisfactory. However, there is inconsistency between classes. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make faster progress than pupils in Key Stage 1. In particular, higher attaining pupils do better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. In Year 2, no pupils attained higher levels in reading, writing or mathematics in the recent end-of-Key Stage 1 assessment round.

Although Year 6 pupils had sat their end-of-Key Stage 2 assessment tasks in May, the results were not available at the time of the inspection visit. Nevertheless, teacher assessment indicates that Year 6 pupils should attain higher scores this year in each subject providing they all meet their targets. Currently, there are more higher attaining pupils in Year 6 than in the previous two years. During the next inspection visit, it will be possible to compare the judgements of the school with the outcomes of the statutory assessment tasks since the data will be available.

Pupils in Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 were about to take non-statutory tests in English and mathematics at the time of the inspection. The school's data, up to the end of the spring term, shows that most pupils in these year groups are making satisfactory

progress in reading and mathematics. Their progress in writing is more variable. On scrutinising pupils' work, it was evident that they do not make such steady progress in writing.

### Personal development and well-being

Pupils pay good attention in lessons and are well motivated to learn. Their behaviour is very good. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. The pupils' social skills are well developed. Pupils show high levels of respect for each other and for the adults working with them. They show an increasing awareness of the benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle and enjoy participating in sporting and musical activities. The Year 5 and Year 6 pupils had just returned from a very successful residential trip to the Isle of Wight. Staff and pupils spoke highly of the happy time they had together because there was a good team spirit and a willingness to take advantage of all the opportunities on offer.

### Quality of provision

Teaching has improved since the last inspection visit. More good teaching was seen this time because most lessons proceeded at a good pace and learning objectives were clear. Teachers are planning different activities for different groups of pupils and this is a positive development. However, these activities are not always exactly matched to the abilities of the pupils. For example, lower attaining pupils might be set a more challenging task than middle attaining pupils. The staff/pupil ratio is very good. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support pupils' learning. In one lesson, the teaching assistants were particularly helpful during the first part of the session when they recorded which pupils responded to the teacher's questions.

Teachers are more secure in their assessment of pupils' learning than they were previously. They know their pupils well. In lessons, their questioning is supportive to gauge pupils' understanding. Pupils' work across the school is marked regularly. Marking is invariably encouraging. However, sometimes, it is insufficiently focused upon giving pupils advice on how to improve their work. This is because it is not always linked directly to the learning objective.

Teachers are becoming increasingly proficient at analysing pupil progress data and targeting those at risk of underachieving. The area for development lies in ensuring that pupils are assessed regularly so that teachers can meet their agreed aim of recording pupils' progress twice a term. In particular, more mathematics evidence is needed in Year 2 in order to make a reliable judgement about each child's achievement. There is exemplary practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the teacher uses the profile scores very effectively to drive the planning. For example, the teacher planned more opportunities to develop children's phonic awareness and improve their calculation skills in response to their low profile scores last term. At the end of the year, the children had made good progress in these areas and caught up.

The climate for learning is improving. The arrival of the new mobile classroom in the summer term has made a big difference. Classrooms are brighter and more stimulating learning environments. Curricular targets are well displayed and pupils know their targets. However, there is scope for wall displays to celebrate pupils' work more and particularly their writing. Pupils' presentation of their work is getting better but their handwriting is not as good as it could be.

There has been a strong and appropriate focus on mathematics and English in order to raise standards. The local authority has provided intensive support for mathematics, particularly on improving the quality of mental and oral starters and this has had a positive impact on improving pupils' mental mathematical skills. Writing is now high on the agenda. At present, there is some inconsistency between classes in planning opportunities for pupils to write independently in English lessons as opposed to completing English exercises. Often, the pupils' more extended pieces of writing are in their 'themed' writing books, which they write in at the beginning of the school day. However, these are not marked by the teacher. Better use could be made of the work in these books to reinforce the principles of good quality and interesting writing.

Pupils are encouraged to consolidate their literacy and mathematical skills in other subjects, such as science, history, geography and religious education and this is a good initiative. They are given opportunities to solve problems and to use and apply their skills in science and mathematics. For example, in science, they make good use of their data handling skills to record and present evidence. Provision for information and communication technology has also improved significantly this term. Teachers are confident using interactive whiteboards to support their teaching. Pupils are beginning to have more opportunities to use computers in class but there is scope for further development in this area.

Pupils are well guided in their learning. Individual education plans for pupils with additional learning needs and/or disabilities have recently been revised. Teachers are now involved in drawing them up and monitoring their effectiveness. This is resulting in better targeted provision for those pupils in lessons.

## Judgement

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement

- Ensure that pupils' progress is assessed accurately and regularly, and that the data is used to inform planning, set targets and identify pupils needing extra support – satisfactory
- Ensure that National Curriculum course requirements are met fully, particularly in relation to the requirements for using and applying skills in mathematics and science – good

## Leadership and management

The school is on the road to recovery following the special measures judgement in June 2008. It has made good progress since the last inspection visit. The acting headteacher continues to give clear direction and the leadership team has been strengthened significantly this term with the arrival of a curriculum manager. Already, the curriculum manager is influencing practice as he assumes the role of lead professional and works with staff and pupils in every class. Staff development has a high priority too. Staff have been very well supported in developing their expertise and this is evident in the improved quality of teaching observed. There is a strong sense of teamwork within the school and a shared understanding of what constitutes good practice, and where the school needs to go next.

Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and are considering the options for the future leadership of the school. Staffing issues for the autumn term have been resolved. Governors achieve a good balance between challenge and support. They are working well with the project board to set strategic priorities, and to introduce and implement change. There is evidence of impact, particularly in establishing trust amongst colleagues and promoting a commitment to move forward. Parents' views are also actively sought. They are invited into their children's classrooms every Tuesday after school and to termly meetings with the headteacher and chair of governors. This has led to more open communication between staff and parents.

The raising attainment plan continues to drive improvement. The school responds promptly to issues identified during inspection and by local authority consultants. As a result, standards are rising and teaching has improved. The challenge now is to embed the changes fully in the new class structure in September and sustain the momentum of improvement through rigorous self evaluation. Monitoring of standards and of teaching and learning has begun. It provides a firm basis for identifying staff development needs and for setting priorities for improvement.

## Judgement

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure that leadership responsibilities are effectively devolved throughout the school - good
- Set up a rigorous system for monitoring the effectiveness of provision – satisfactory

## External support

The school is very well supported by the local authority and the Diocese. Both have been well represented on the project board. The board has been rigorous in ensuring that members are well informed about progress against key actions.

The local authority has also provided intensive high quality support to raise standards in mathematics and English and to improve professional practice. In addition, the school has been funded for thirty days to release the senior management team to work with colleagues throughout the school. This has enabled the curriculum manager to get to know each class and to begin to consider how to broaden the curriculum while retaining a strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills.

The school has benefited considerably from the well targeted support of the Diocese and local authority. It is now time to rely less on this support and use the outcomes of self evaluation to drive improvement.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improving the quality of writing