

Tribal Group  
1-4 Portland  
Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR  
T 0845 123 6001  
F 0845 123 6002

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



13 May 2009

Mrs C Edgington-White  
The Headteacher  
Lickhill Primary School  
Almond Way  
Stourport-on-Severn  
Worcestershire  
DY13 8UA

Dear Mrs Edgington-White

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Lickhill Primary School

Following my visit with Fran Ashworth and Mary Usher-Clark to your school on 29 and 30 April 2009, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in December 2008. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate.

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 chair of governors and the Director of Children's Services for Worcestershire.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Parker  
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Lickhill Primary School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 29 and 30 April 2009

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, groups of pupils, the chair and deputy chair of governors and a representative from the local authority.

## Context

The school was originally due to close in 2011 as part of the reorganisation of the Wyre Forest. However, following the successful appeal by the governors, the school is to remain open.

Since the school went into special measures in December 2008 there have been several staff changes. The newly appointed deputy headteacher took up post in January 2009. He has particular responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage following the retirement of the previous coordinator. The teacher who taught pupils in Year 3 left the school in February and a teacher who previously taught part time in school now has a class teaching responsibility for these pupils.

## Achievement and standards

Since the school became subject to special measures there has been no improvement in the progress pupils make in lessons. Achievement, particularly of higher attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, remains too low. Although the school has now begun to use the local authority recommended system for target setting and tracking pupils' progress, it is in the early stages of use. Teachers are not using it to ensure that lessons are appropriately differentiated or to help them make targeted interventions to improve learning and progress. Only one teacher made effective use of the National Curriculum levels in lesson planning, and only one other teacher used the information on pupils' progress to set targets in English and mathematics. Consequently, there is still insufficient challenge provided for higher attaining pupils in all classes. In addition, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make less progress than others in the same class. Some pupils are not receiving the support they need to enable them to understand and participate effectively in lessons. The school is unclear whether pupils will achieve their targets in the summer.

The Early Years Foundation Stage was judged good in December but children's achievement deteriorated during the spring term. However, since the arrival of new staff in this area, most children are currently achieving broadly in line with expectations for their age.

Progress since the last inspection:

- eliminate underachievement, raise standards and increase rates of progress, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 and for the most able pupils throughout the school – inadequate.

### Personal development and well-being

Pupils' attitudes to learning vary considerably. Some pupils respect their teachers and enjoy most aspects of school life. Others dislike many subjects and spend lessons chatting, passing notes and preventing others from concentrating. Pupils say that there is bullying but, when it is reported, teachers usually successfully intervene. Older pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to take responsibility, for example as prefects, monitors or 'buddies'. However, the school rewards pupils who show responsibility or sympathy for others and the pupils value the certificates they receive. Pupils have some awareness of safety issues. They know about healthy eating but do not always make healthy food choices themselves. There are too few opportunities to go on trips and opportunities are not distributed equally across classes. Pupils' ability to work together cooperatively is very variable. Whilst a few are very good and can work and discuss productively, others find it difficult to work in groups. Assemblies are poorly planned and do not contribute to spiritual development or to pupils' understanding and appreciation of the richness of other cultures and religions.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy their learning. Most children, especially the higher attaining pupils, concentrate well on their tasks. Relationships between teacher and children are good.

The before and after school club provides a safe environment for children. Adults and pupils get on well together and there is an appropriate range of activities, including opportunities for children to complete their homework.

### Quality of provision

The school's monitoring of teaching and the inspectors' observations on this visit agree that the quality of teaching has declined since the last inspection.

Teachers' written planning has improved. Most plans now recognise what pupils have achieved in previous lessons and aim to build on these skills with work matched to the range of pupils' abilities. However, in too many lessons these good intentions are not realised. This is because of poor classroom management or an inability to keep to the planned timings. In several lessons observed, planned short starter activities lasted over half the lesson. Key elements were missed out. Pupils had to wait for long periods for the teacher to notice they were not learning or had not understood enough to even begin. Consequently, behaviour in such lessons deteriorated and pupils were distracted from learning.

Whilst teachers now share the lesson objectives with pupils at the start of lessons, they are not sufficiently matched to pupils' different capabilities and do not link to

National Curriculum levels. Teachers' comments in books rarely provide practical guidance showing pupils how to improve. When asked what they could do to make progress, pupils could only provide broad generalisations such as 'I need to try harder' or 'I need to get at least 7 out of 10'. Even the older pupils do not know the National Curriculum level at which they are working.

In a few classes, pupils debate and discuss a variety of issues and readily present their ideas to the group. In these classes, teachers' questions help pupils to think more deeply and to consider alternatives. However, in too many lessons the majority of questions limit pupils' opportunities to explain their thinking and they are not helped to talk purposefully in pairs or groups. Teachers talk for too much of the time and insufficient use is made of the computers available to bring lessons to life.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills. Teachers' planning shows an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities, providing opportunities for children to begin to develop their independence.

Progress since the last inspection:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning, raising expectations and making sure pupils' work is challenging and matched consistently to their different starting points and capabilities – inadequate.

## Leadership and management

The senior leadership team lacks a strategic understanding of what the school needs to do to make improvements against any of the key issues. There is insufficient rigour in the monitoring carried out by the senior leaders because they do not know how to do this effectively. The school's development plan does not take account of the key issues. Plans drawn up by the school lack rigour and are not sufficiently strategic; they do not have quantifiable targets and do not include milestone objectives. The senior leaders are not evaluating their actions. Thus, the school does not have an informed view of progress and is unclear about the impact of actions. Progress has been hampered by poor relationships with the local authority. Actions taken by the school are not sufficiently coordinated. Support to improve questioning in English has not been seen as a way to improve questioning in other lessons. The introduction of the new tracking system has left teachers feeling unsure of what to do and is not being used strategically to ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged. Audits have been carried out which have had no impact on bringing about improvements.

The school fails to meet statutory requirements for safeguarding. There are no risk assessments in place for the site and for the curriculum. There are no regular health and safety walks and findings are not reported to governors. There is no logbook for racist incidents and this is not a regular agenda item for governors. There is no bullying log. The school also fails to meet its statutory requirement for a daily act of corporate worship.

Governance remains inadequate. Governors are not sufficiently holding the senior leadership team to account and are failing to monitor the school's progress on the key issues. They are not challenging the school's own view of itself. Governors agree that the school is slipping further backwards. Governors acknowledge that their monitoring is weak and they have asked for support in this.

The recently appointed deputy headteacher has had limited impact on whole school improvement because he has too many responsibilities including the role of coordinator for pupils with special needs and manager for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Subject coordinators are currently too inexperienced to monitor teaching and learning effectively. The school continues to lack the capacity to improve.

Progress since the last inspection:

- improve the quality of collective leadership and management, which includes senior staff and governors, ensuring a more rigorous approach to monitoring and more effective tracking of pupils' progress; using assessment information rigorously to identify and eliminate the causes of underachievement – inadequate.
- ensure a more equitable distribution of roles and responsibilities among senior staff, and evaluate the impact of their work more effectively, in relation to raising achievement –inadequate.

External support

The amended local authority action plan meets the requirements identified by Ofsted, with the exception that it still requires a review date.

The external support provided by the local authority is having a limited impact because of delays in implementing the action plan. Support for senior leaders has not been sufficiently forthcoming to strengthen their skills of monitoring and evaluation.

Priorities for further improvement

- Meet statutory safeguarding requirements by: ensuring that the site is secure; carrying out regular health and safety checks; maintaining up to date risk assessments for the school site and the curriculum and reporting all findings to the governing body.
- Meet statutory requirements for racial incidents, bullying logs and daily corporate worship.
- Ensure that monitoring of the key issues by the senior leadership team and governors provides an accurate picture of progress and helps to guide staff in taking the next steps.