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Mr K McCabe  
Headteacher  
Jervoise Junior and Infant School  
Jervoise Road  
Weoley Castle  
Birmingham  
B29 5QU

Dear Mr McCabe

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Jervoise Junior and Infant School

Following my visit to your school on 10 and 11 November 2009, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

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

Progress since being subject to special measures – good

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Cartwright  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Jervoise Junior and Infant School

Report from the fourth monitoring inspection on 10 and 11 November 2009

## Evidence

I observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject coordinators, the school improvement partner, a representative from the local authority and the chair of governors.

## Context

A substantive deputy headteacher took up post in September 2009, giving the school a full compliment of permanent teaching staff for the first time since being subject to special measures. There is a rising number of pupils who join the school other than in the reception class. A new information and communication technology (ICT) technician began work recently, to support a substantial increase in ICT resources in classrooms.

## Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

Standards reached by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 national assessments carried out in the summer of 2009 remained below average, according to preliminary results. Once the context of the school is taken into account, however, the Year 2 results are similar to schools in similar circumstances. For that Year group (the current Year 3 pupils) standards in writing were, however, still too low. The whole school is sustaining a focus on improving writing performance. Work of the Year 3 and 4 pupils shows clear evidence of improvement since the start of this autumn term.

The achievement of Year 6 pupils from the 2008/09 academic year was in line with the expected progress based on pupil prior attainment at Key Stage 1. This was therefore significantly better than the inadequate progress of the previous year. This is telling evidence of improvements in pupil learning that are beginning to result from improvements in teaching. That same satisfactory progress overall was not evident for pupils at school action or school action plus stages of the special educational needs register. The school has already changed the organisation of support for these pupils, primarily by a major re-grouping of classes that gives better opportunities for differentiation and targeted support by teachers for these pupils.

The work of the current Year 6 is not yet fully in line with age-related expectations but is nevertheless consistent with at least satisfactory progress, given the very low starting points for many of these pupils. The common weakness for many pupils remains writing, although this is improving thanks to much better formative assessment by teachers, and many more opportunities for pupils to write, rather than just sit and listen in class.

Progress since the last visit on the area for improvement:

- Improve standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science – satisfactory

The effectiveness of provision

Teaching has continued to improve and is now securely good. I observed 9 lessons, of which 7 were good and none were unsatisfactory. Most of the lesson planning is exceptionally well differentiated to meet individual pupil needs, and is well matched to their ability. As a result, lessons are lively, challenging, and move pupils through their learning at a brisk pace. Teachers put their heart and souls and a lot of preparation into making lesson introductions interesting, captivating younger children with tales of adventure. One such example revolved around a story book whose theme was 'Aliens love Underpants'. Pupils couldn't wait to find out what happened, and whether real Aliens had indeed arrived in the school! This approach was making literacy come alive for pupils who were previously reluctant to pick up a pencil and write. Very young pupils have very rich learning opportunities, and consequently are engrossed in developing their skills of communication and social interaction. Older pupils have considerable independence for research using the enhanced ICT provision. In all but one lesson pupils were using ICT to support their own learning.

All classrooms are maintaining up-to-date 'Wonder Walls', that display questions asked by pupils as part of what they want to know about a topic. These are fascinating insights into pupil thinking, reflecting concrete evidence of an open and inquisitive learning culture. For example, the Year 5/6 classes are studying 'Impressionist' artists; one questioner wondered what 'Impressionists did for a job!' Pupils are also becoming familiar with the success criteria relating to different academic levels of work, and beginning to self and peer assess their work. Teachers' marking is now consistently good, with diagnostic comment, praise and direct instruction on what needs to improve. Pupils now try to respond in writing, and in most cases there is evidence of a dialogue between teacher and pupil that leads to correction and improvement. Teachers are now confidently insisting that pupils 'close the gaps' in their work, and provide time in lessons for pupils to do so.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it meets the needs of all pupils – good

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The headteacher has continued to drive up the quality of provision, though a skilful balance of support and challenge to staff. Staff can now see concrete evidence of better outcomes for pupils. The working ethos has become lively and enjoyable for

both staff and pupils. Attendance of pupils is improving, serious disciplinary events reducing to very low levels, and staff absence has also reduced. Moral is high, because staff can see they have the capacity within themselves to further raise standards. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has swiftly established credibility, and enjoys the confidence of staff. There is a high level of monitoring of teaching and learning, carried out in a mutually agreeable climate of professional and personal support. Middle managers have a much greater sense of accountability to the school and are enjoying that responsibility. Governors have now organised and planned a sequence of activities to tackle a backlog of tasks that had, understandably, been postponed pending the establishment of the substantive leadership team. This includes the need for a careful evaluation of the impact of policies related to equality of opportunity and access, and an audit of the role the school could play in promoting community cohesion. Safeguarding arrangements at the time of the visit were robust, and staff expressed confidence in the procedures for identifying concerns surrounding child protection. Those procedures are in active use. The school is drafting a long-term strategic plan, although has not yet conducted a formal self-evaluation of provision that might help inform that plan. The stability of staffing now in place will facilitate a corporate contribution to the emerging development plan ready for the next monitoring visit.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Improve leadership and management at all levels in the school. – satisfactory

#### External support

The local authority has continued to provide good support for the school, with accurate evaluations and judgements by the school improvement partner a key strength in this regard. Specialist support for teachers, involving local authority consultative staff is relevant and useful. The school is becoming more self-sufficient as teaching quality improves, but still values the expertise and advice from the local authority. The priority for that support is in relation to improving the writing skills across all ages, because weaknesses here remain a barrier to higher standards across all areas of learning.