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Mrs S Jones
Nyewood C of E Junior School
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Dear Mrs Jones

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Nyewood C of E Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 23 March 2010, 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 October 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 – good.

Newly qualified teachers may 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, the Director of Children's Services for West Sussex and the Director of Education for the Diocese of Chichester.

Yours sincerely

Mike Burghart
Additional inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Nyewood CofE Junior School

Report from the fourth monitoring inspection on 23 March 2010

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, visited seven lessons or parts of lessons, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, senior staff, groups of pupils, and a representative from the diocese. He spoke to the chair of governors and a member of the local authority on the telephone.

Context

There have been a variety of important changes since the last monitoring visit. Two teachers, one of whom was temporary, have left and been replaced. Two teachers, one of which is part time are on maternity leave. A new team leader for Years 5 and 6, a new subject leader and a new assessment coordinator have been appointed from within the school, and the deputy headteacher has taken over leadership of the Years 3 and 4 team. He now teaches for three days a week in a class in that age group. One-to-one tuition under the recently instigated government scheme started this term in support of ten pupils. Booster groups and extra provision for gifted and talented pupils are now in place.

The post of headteacher remains unfilled and the seconded consultant headteacher continues to lead the school. She is committed to this role until the uncertainty is resolved.

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

Lesson observations show that pupils' attitudes and behaviour are almost always good. Pupils respond well to work that interests them and to good relationships with staff. These positives are more common, but not exclusively so, in classes where staffing is stable and where teaching is good or better, for example in Years 5 and 6. Nevertheless, the introduction and consolidation of joint planning for classes of similar age groups is guaranteeing equality of opportunity. It is providing the basis for work aimed at different ability levels. As a result, pupils enjoy most of what they have to do. The school councillors were keen to say how much more interesting both writing and mathematics have become this term and this is clearly due to the renewed emphasis on both subjects. Progress seen in lessons was at least satisfactory. This confirms the improving picture, shown in the data available from the new pupil tracker system, that the majority of pupils are making expected gains over the course of the year. More Year 6 pupils are predicted to reach above average levels this summer in both English and mathematics. Whilst the overall profile of attainment is still likely to be below average, when evaluated using average point scores, this represents improvement which is attributable to the



impact of better provision. Pupils' work shows that writing and the investigative aspects of mathematics and science are the most improved areas. Most pupils are now achieving appropriately for their ability, but there are still pockets of underachievement which stem from gaps in previous learning whilst at this school.

Systems to support those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, relating additional support to National Curriculum levels, are much improved. These developments have not yet had time to have a full impact on learning, but there are signs that they are proving effective in helping more of such pupils to make good progress.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- raise standards and achievement especially in writing and mathematics by ensuring that lessons are planned to provide activities that match precisely the needs of pupils of all ability levels – good.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Strengths previously reported in personal development and pupils' positive contribution to school and community life have been maintained. This is very much related to the good care the school takes of pupils. The school council, representing pupils from all classes and across the ability range, gives pupils a voice and is the vehicle for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility. Fundraising for Haiti and participation in activities for Children in Need have been orchestrated by pupils themselves and are good examples of the success of the school's Christian core values.

The effectiveness of provision

All the teaching observed was at least satisfactory, and some showed good features. There are some excellent models to build on. Examples were seen in a Years 3 and 4 literacy lesson with pupils writing newsletters, and in a Years 5 and 6 geography session where pupils investigated the sources of rivers. On both occasions the quality of questioning and the way pupils were guided to make improvements were outstanding. Unsurprisingly, pupils were eager to learn and made very good progress. However, as school monitoring records show, there is still a small minority of lessons, mostly affecting pupils in Years 3 and 4, that are inadequate. Here, pupils can be insufficiently challenged, with expectations that are too low. In a few lessons observed, pace was too slow, with pupils waiting overlong before being active in their learning. On these occasions, pupils did not make as much progress as they should, but the incidence of this is markedly less than in previous monitoring visits. The improvement is very much due to better planning, learning objectives made clear in all lessons, and the increased use of targets and opportunities for pupils to participate in evaluating their own progress. Developing the consistency of how such



recently introduced assessment procedures are used across all classes and in a variety of subjects to show pupils exactly what will improve their work remains a priority. Nevertheless, the growing impact of what has already been achieved on pupils' progress is good. Progress in curriculum development is satisfactory. The school shares the inspector's view that there is more to do but there are positive indications that moves to establish a thematic approach are working. Pupils from all classes are keen to say they find work more interesting and are especially pleased with the new ICT facilities and equipment. They talk enthusiastically of the visits and visitors that bring topics to life.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- ensure that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory by ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the same opportunities to enjoy and extend their learning, all teachers consistently make use of pupils' targets and mark work to show how improvements can be made, and lessons move with suitable pace – satisfactory
- develop rigorous systems to track and analyse pupils' progress to provide information that precisely informs teachers' planning and target setting – good
- improve the curriculum by providing more interesting and exciting activities to boost pupils' enjoyment, motivation and interest in learning – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The momentum described in the last three monitoring visits has been maintained. The vision and ambition of the seconded headteacher are communicated well to senior leaders and governors. Although the school's leadership and management remain vulnerable, given the continued uncertainty concerning the appointment of a substantive headteacher, there is a culture of 'We can'. This is backed up with robust challenge and corporate contributions which facilitate meaningful change whilst sustaining what already is proving successful. There are outstanding features in the progress made in developing self evaluation since the school was put into category. Strengths in pastoral care have been maintained and support for those with additional needs has been improved, with clearly defined learning goals linked more relevantly to class work in general. There is a shared ownership of priorities and plans for future development which is rooted in honest self-evaluation. Staff morale is good. Governors are well informed and obviously prepared to challenge the need for, and the impact of, decisions made. The newly revised senior management team plays a good part in leading and monitoring the school's performance. Its members set a very good example to others and provide good support for the development of planning and the quality of teaching. The introduction of more joint and peer observation is spreading good practice. Developing the management role of middle managers is the next step in ensuring that the school has a strong capacity to improve. Recent coordinator appointments show good signs of enhancing overall management but, in a variety of subjects, these are as yet untried in terms of the effect on pupils' attainment.



Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- develop more effective monitoring and self-evaluation systems so that the school can more exactly pinpoint what needs to be done to improve provision – good
- improve the quality of leadership, management and governance of the school by articulating a clear vision to help staff take ownership for improvement – good.

External support

The local authority continues to be effective in supporting the school. Understandably at this stage in the development process, this is at a lower level than when the school had just been deemed to require special measures. As the school has proved itself more capable, it has been able to work with the authority to tailor support to its own priorities. Continued support to cover the long-term vacant headteacher's post, and the inclusion of a headteacher consultant for two days a week, are much valued by staff and governors. Good external support for coordinators for special educational needs, assessment and mathematics has been successful in bringing about improvements. Pairing of teachers with staff from other schools has brought about positive developments, most notably in religious education, ICT and French.

Priorities for further improvement

No new areas for development have been identified. Continuing the ongoing work against the original issues specified in the report which put the school into category in October 2008 is the way forward. The school has demonstrated that it is on the right track and appreciates that raising and maintaining attainment and ensuring that pupils do not underachieve are still fundamental to its success.