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Mrs Clare Williams
Acting Headteacher
Winklebury Junior School
Willoughby Way
Basingstoke
RG23 8AF

Dear Mrs Williams

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Winklebury Junior School

Following my visit with Christopher Gray, Additional Inspector, to your school on 24 and 25 February 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 fifth 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 – satisfactory

One newly qualified teacher 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 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 fifth monitoring inspection on 24 and 25 February 2010

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work; scrutinised documents and met the acting headteacher, middle leaders, representatives of the local authority, and the chair of governors.

Context

A new acting headteacher of the federated infant and junior school has been in post since the start of the current term. Temporary leadership arrangements will continue until the governing body appoints a substantive headteacher for the start of the next academic year.

Currently, three classes are taught by temporary teachers.

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

The improved progress made by pupils in all year groups seen at the last visit has been sustained by many, but the contrast and variation in the progress between those who are now doing well in lessons, and a minority in Years 3 and 4 who are not, has become stark.

In lessons, in their work and in the school's analysis of progress, it is clear that many pupils are now making the progress expected of them and that these pupils are making inroads into earlier underachievement. Many pupils are benefiting from the increased range of opportunities to use the skills they are taught in mathematics to solve problems that are set in everyday contexts. The contrast between progress in one class in Year 3 and 4 and the other two is marked. In two classes the pupils are successfully learning to write information texts and are developing an understanding of how to edit and improve their writing, whereas in the other class, progress in developing these skills is much slower, because lessons lack clarity and pupils are not taught well enough.

In Year 6, very effective teaching continues the drive to raise attainment by the end of the year and, thereby, build on the improvements made in national test results last year. Many pupils in Year 6 are now making better than expected progress and are making up some of the ground that they lost in previous years.

The robust systems for checking the pupils' progress are becoming more refined and effective in highlighting the progress of groups, such as those with special



educational needs and/or disabilities and those who have joined the school during the course of the year. Focused meetings are identifying barriers to progress for pupils who face particular challenges, so that they can receive the help that they need to enable them to make better progress.

Progress since the last visit on the area for improvement:

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

Other relevant pupil outcomes

The pupils' behaviour and politeness, and the respect they show for each other continue to improve. The positive impact of improved support for those who have challenging behaviour adds to the increasingly constructive climate for learning evident in most classes. Improvements in attitudes to learning and pupils' enjoyment are being sustained, and most of them concentrate and apply themselves well to the tasks set by their teachers. Most are eager to participate, answer questions and contribute to discussions. This was the case in Year 6 where pupils were recording interviews with other pupils who were in the role of a character from a story. This activity provided the basis for a newspaper article that they were about to write. However, when they are not fully interested in the lesson they quickly become restless.

The introduction of more opportunities to take on responsibility has been warmly welcomed by the older pupils, who have recently applied to be considered as prefects, and who now have an anxious wait to see whether they are to be selected.

Attendance remains below average and a focus for improvement. During assembly many pupils were awarded a certificate for their 100% attendance in the last half term.

The effectiveness of provision

Much of the teaching continues to benefit from the support and development provided by the acting headteacher, consultants and the phase leaders. As a result, members of the permanent teaching staff have grown in confidence and provide many good and occasionally outstanding lessons. This is the reason why many pupils are making much-improved progress. However, some temporary teachers have not responded rapidly enough to the support given to them or to the expectations and demands placed upon them. On this visit, a few of the lessons seen, notably but not solely in one Year 3 and 4 class, were not of an adequate standard, and consequently pupils were not making enough progress. One of the underlining weaknesses in these lessons was that the information collected about pupils' previous knowledge was not used well enough to match the new learning to the

needs of pupils of differing abilities. Moreover, explanations were confused and classroom management weak.

In Year 6, the phase leader's very effective skills continue to be used to teach English and mathematics in both classes. The pupils have now settled into this routine, and recent analysis of the pupils' progress indicates that most are on course to reach the targets set for them.

Marking continues to improve, and is used to good effect in a number of classes where the teachers not only comment on the quality of the pupils' work but also make it clear what they need to do to make improvements. The pupils respond well to these comments. However, in a few classes the teachers are not providing the same level of help and guidance for the pupils.

The newly appointed special educational needs coordinator is working with each teacher to ensure that the provision made for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well matched to their needs. She has also improved provision for those who have behavioural difficulties. In general, behaviour management is effective and in most lessons pupils respond quickly when their teacher wants to talk to them. In weaker lessons, however, the teachers rely repeatedly on strategies such as counting down from five. This has the effect of interrupting the flow of the lesson and reducing the impact of the strategy, and as a result the pupils become less responsive.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The acting headteacher is continuing to drive forward the school's improvement plans at a good pace. Having dealt with some setbacks resulting from changes of temporary teachers last term, the leadership team is now dealing with a similar challenge this term. Rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching, detailed scrutiny of pupils' work, and robust progress meetings all mean that weaknesses in teaching are quickly exposed. The acting headteacher is taking direct action to ensure that the teaching in all classes meets expectations, and that it is always securely satisfactory or better.

The deputy headteacher is playing a more strategic role within the school. She is currently leading a project to replace the school's information and communication technology resources, and is planning training for staff to ensure that it is used effectively to enhance the curriculum and promote faster progress. The phase leaders continue to be at the hub of the school's drive for improvement. Their



knowledge of the pupils' progress and leadership of staff meetings and progress meetings are proving to be central to the school's recovery.

The federated governing body is playing an increasing role in directing the school's future. It is currently engaged in recruiting a headteacher for the federated infant and junior school. The chair of governors is devolving responsibilities to governors to make full use of the skills that they bring to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the governing body. Governors are now building links with phase and subject leaders so that they can hold the federated schools to account for their performance.

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

Although the local authority continues to provide support for the school, and is instrumental in ensuring that it has the temporary leadership that it needs in order to continue to improve, it has moved on to a phase of scaling down external support so as to allow the middle leaders within the school to take on greater responsibility. This reflects the success of the local authority's support, and is necessary for the school to establish a secure capacity to improve in the future.