

Suite 22 West  
Lancs  
Investment Centre  
Maple View  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 9TG

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

Direct T 01695 566930  
Direct F 01695 729320

5 February 2010

Mrs Amanda Casey  
Headteacher  
Bewsey Lodge Primary School  
Lodge Lane  
Bewsey  
Warrington  
WA5 0AG

Dear Mrs Casey

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Bewsey Lodge Primary School

Following my visit with Michael Sheridan HMI and Sarah Drake, additional inspector, to your school on 3–4 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 third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in November 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 and the Director of Children's Services for Warrington.

Yours sincerely

Marguerite McCloy  
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Bewsey Lodge Primary School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 3–4 February 2010

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, leadership team and some class teachers, members of the governing body, the school's adviser and executive headteacher, and a representative from the local authority. As the Year 6 pupils were out of school on a residential visit, inspectors carried out a scrutiny of the work in their books.

## Context

There have been no changes to the context of the school or to staffing since the previous monitoring inspection in October 2009.

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

Pupils' enjoyment of their learning is apparent across the school and in most lessons. Good relationships, positive attitudes to learning and an enthusiastic approach by teachers who are keen to do their best for the children are helping to promote good progress in the majority of classes. The school's detailed planning of short, focused interventions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also improving the rate of progress made by those pupils.

As indicated in the previous monitoring letter, the 2009 assessments and tests showed some improvement on the preceding two years. Although still well below average at the end of Key Stage 2, the gap between the school's results and national averages is narrowing, more so in English than mathematics. Leaders have analysed the underachievement of a small group of girls last year. The school has found that, in fact, there is more scope to raise the aspirations of all groups of pupils so that they understand the importance of believing in themselves and working hard to achieve their goals.

At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was only just below average overall. Particular improvement in mathematics led to a better than average performance in this subject at the higher Level 3. The work seen in class for this group of pupils, now in Year 3, confirms the view that standards are rising. Similarly, pupils in the current Year 4 are on track to reach their challenging targets, which will represent significant progress from their prior attainment at Key Stage 1. The scrutiny of Year 6 work supports the school's view that attainment there is in line with national expectations and represents at least satisfactory and often good progress for these pupils. Inconsistencies remain in the attainment of pupils in the school's largest cohort, Year 5, where the legacy of underachievement



is most apparent. However, the school is working relentlessly to remedy this by tackling areas of underperformance and making best use of available expertise and strength, for example of the teacher leader provided by the local authority. In addition, the local authority has supported the school's request for a significant number of places for Year 5 pupils on the '1:1 tuition' national scheme, due to commence soon.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Raise standards and improve achievement throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 – satisfactory

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils' behaviour continues to be good or better in classes and around the school, including at lunchtimes, although pupils and adults are not complacent about the need to ensure that this is the norm. A school survey of parents' and pupils' views last term indicated that a minority had concerns about some aspects of behaviour. This survey, carried out as part of the school's commitment to community cohesion, led the school council to look at actions that could be taken as a result. This is just one example of the ways in which pupils are taking on responsibilities and making a contribution to their community. Others include the 'playground buddy' system and pupils' support for a range of charities through fundraising. Pupils' personal development is enhanced by their growing understanding of responsibility, friendships, and valuing peoples' differences. These, and aspects of their spiritual and cultural development, are enlightened by well-organised theme days or weeks, and the recent introduction of 'Schools Challenge Days'. This innovative approach enables pupils to work alongside other schools in the locality, with a particular focus on getting to know pupils in other socio-economic circumstances to their own.

The school is working hard to improve pupils' achievement and thereby their chances of economic well-being in the future. It is aware that key contributing factors include the quality of pupils' learning and progress, their aspirations, and good work habits such as attendance and punctuality. The importance of good attendance continues to be emphasised to pupils and their families at every opportunity, and is regularly monitored. Good attendance is promoted, celebrated and rewarded and pupils are keen to achieve the challenges set. Attendance figures are affected by a minority of pupils whose reasons for poor attendance are carefully checked and followed up. Despite this, the overall attendance figures for the school are currently just below national average for this academic year so far.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Improve attendance – good



## The effectiveness of provision

The improvements in teaching and learning noted at the last monitoring visit have been maintained and built upon so that these are sustainable and improving in consistency. This judgement takes into account lessons observed across the school during this visit, and the headteachers' accurate evaluation and analysis of the strengths and areas for development in teaching. Inspectors' views matched closely those of the school. Some of the strengths noted in a range of lessons were:

- pupils enjoying a range of 'warm-up' tasks in starter activities
- good use of interactive whiteboard technology as a teaching resource
- 'talking partners' and discussion usually well timed and used effectively to promote pupils' communication skills and their understanding of the subject matter
- for the small minority of pupils who find it difficult to behave well, good support is given and behaviour contracts are used effectively to establish good routines
- comprehensive marking by teachers, based on learning objectives
- consistent expectations and routines, for example, teachers commenting on 'good listening', 'good reading', so that pupils are clear about what is being praised; and promoting effective learning strategies, for example 'think it, say it, write it, read it!'
- effective deployment of skilled teaching assistants to make a good contribution to pupils' learning, within class group work and intervention activities and in the enhanced provision at Key Stage 1
- 'connecting the learning' so that previous work and future work were linked well to improve understanding, for example in lesson introductions and plenaries, or through short bursts of teacher input at appropriate points, rather than talking for too long at the start of a lesson
- younger children knowing routines and feeling happy and secure while accessing all areas of learning provided for.

When learning is satisfactory rather than good or better, some of the features above are absent from the teaching and from the pupils' overall experience of the lesson. Inspectors also discussed with the leadership team some key points that were agreed as being important if learning and progress are to be accelerated further. The use of assessment to support learning is not always as effective as it could be. Some teachers are more skilled than others at ensuring that work is more closely matched to the needs of all ability groups; that questioning challenges individuals appropriately at their level of understanding; and that their detailed marking is responded to by pupils and leads to improvements in their next piece of work. There are occasions when teacher talk is more extensive than pupil response, because insufficient attention is paid to giving pupils thinking time and challenging them to refine their answers and extend their ideas. Some pupils' books show a significant proportion of unfinished tasks that point to a lack of time or low expectations of independent work.



The school continues to develop its curriculum, which meets pupils' needs and has some strengths. An aspect that is moving on well to enhance pupils' personal development and enjoyment of learning is the school's work on community cohesion, including links with other schools. The positive impact of work to improve cross-curricular links can be seen in the improved quality and variety of attractive displays in classrooms and around the building. These engage pupils' interest, prompt their learning and encourage them to value their own work. Literacy is promoted well across other areas of the curriculum. However, there is less evidence that information and communication technology (ICT) is integrated well to enhance pupils' learning across subjects.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Eradicate inadequate teaching and ensure work is appropriately matched to the needs of all pupils so their learning is at least good – satisfactory

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Strengths noted at the previous monitoring visit have been sustained and further embedded in the school's ethos of raising standards and expectations within a supportive and caring environment. Self-evaluation is honest and accurate. Leadership at all levels provides the school with increasing capacity to develop and improve its effectiveness without significant support from external sources in the future. The headteacher is confident and firm in her belief that the school can and will do better, and is rigorous in challenging underperformance and holding staff accountable for the progress of pupils in their class. She is well supported by skilled senior and middle leaders who have clear roles and responsibilities focused on improving teaching and learning across the school. Teaching and support staff work well as a team, supporting each other and showing a keenness to share and learn from best practice. As a result of this, most teachers have improved their skills and, consequently, the rate of progress their pupils are making. The school's progress tracking records show where an area of weakness remains and this is being addressed in an appropriately rigorous but supportive manner.

Governors, with the guidance of the headteacher and executive headteacher, are increasing their knowledge and understanding of the work of the school and of their role in holding it to account for its performance. Committee structures have been reviewed to improve their effectiveness. Many governors have a link role with a particular class and/or subject area or aspect of the school's work. Governors are aware of the school's strengths and of what needs to be done to accelerate pupils' progress and thereby raise standards. They are learning more about how to make an effective contribution to the school's self-evaluation systems. They appreciate the opportunities to listen to and question members of staff who present information at



governing body meetings. This is helping them to form views about the strengths or shortcomings in the leadership of particular subjects or aspects of the school's work.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, monitor, evaluate and take decisive action to secure improvement – good
- Ensure governors meet all their statutory responsibilities – good

External support

The local authority continues to monitor the school's progress. An effective level of challenge and support is provided in regular visits by an executive headteacher who is also taking the role of the school's assigned adviser for the remainder of the academic year. Reflecting the confidence in the leadership to sustain and further develop the school's improvement, much of the executive headteacher's work involves moderating the leadership's self-evaluation judgements. It is also providing valuable support in dealing with any provision or staffing issues which may arise.

Priorities for further improvement

Raise attainment and improve the rate at which pupils make progress across the school by:

- improving the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, including teachers' use of assessment to support learning, and their expectations of pupils' independent working
- ensuring that leaders and governors continue to identify and challenge any areas of underperformance and employ appropriate strategies to eradicate these
- exploring ways in which to raise pupils' aspirations and thus their motivation to reach higher standards and prepare well for their future economic well-being.