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14 June 2010

Mrs Karen Smith  
Headteacher  
Meadow View Primary School  
Meadowhall Road  
Kimberworth  
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South Yorkshire  
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Dear Mrs Smith

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Meadow View Primary School

Following my visit with Stephen Wall, additional inspector, to your school on 10 and 11 June 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in February 2010. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

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 Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services for Rotherham.

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford  
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Meadow View Primary School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 10-11 June 2010

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised management documents and analysed pupils' work. They met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, the chair of governors and three representatives from the local authority, one of whom is also the School Improvement Partner.

## Context

Since the inspection there have been significant changes to staffing. Some vacant posts are not yet filled with permanent appointments, but arrangements to do so are well advanced.

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

Evidence from lesson observations, pupils' work and school records show that the proportions of pupils making expected and better than expected progress in English and mathematics have increased since the inspection. Rapidly improving progress in independent writing is a particular strength. Although pupils' progress is improving overall, there is still some variability because of the legacy of weak teaching in a small number of classes. In addition, the history of weak and disrupted teaching experienced by the oldest pupils means that improving progress is not yet having an impact on standards at the end of Key Stage 2.

The progress of groups who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved since the inspection. This is because a recently appointed inclusion coordinator has introduced more effective methods for assessing their needs and planning suitable support. The achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved this year, most notably in personal and social development, reading, writing and calculating. This is due to a new phase leader introducing more effective approaches to planning, teaching and assessment.

Progress since the inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics – satisfactory

## Other relevant pupil outcomes

Behaviour and attendance are better than they were at the time of the inspection. This is largely because a recently appointed middle leader is introducing imaginative and effective methods for encouraging pupils to improve, for example, basing



rewards and sanctions on life aboard a pirate ship. The school's effective partnership with external support services has also had a positive impact. Better behaviour is helping pupils to settle down to work in lessons and make better progress. Absence overall is reducing and there has been a significant drop in persistent absenteeism, however, attendance is still below the national average.

Pupils work well independently and they often use discussion with partners effectively to plan answers to teachers' questions. They make less progress in the minority of lessons where they are required to sit and listen for long periods. Pupils enjoy school much more than they did a year ago because teaching is better, poor behaviour has significantly reduced and they have many more opportunities to go on trips to places of interest. They have an increasing influence on decisions that affect their life in school, for example, their ideas have made a strong contribution to the success of the new strategies for improving behaviour and attendance.

Progress since the inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Implement effective strategies to reduce absence – satisfactory

The effectiveness of provision

The quality of teaching and use of assessment have improved since the inspection. There is no longer any inadequate teaching and an increasing proportion is good or better. There is still some inconsistency linked to recent changes in staffing. In the most effective lessons, a brisk pace of learning is maintained because the emphasis is on pupils doing interesting tasks rather than listening or answering questions for long periods. Pupils know what they are aiming to achieve in each lesson and teachers regularly check their progress to see if they need extra guidance or challenge. In a minority of classes, teachers do not target their questions sufficiently to check the understanding of all groups of pupils, nor are their questions probing enough.

The majority of teachers are quickly improving their understanding of the different levels at which their pupils are working and they plan work that is suitably challenging for most groups. Occasionally, there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining groups in mathematics. A recently introduced system for providing pupils with targets is quickly becoming established. As a result, many pupils already show a clear understanding of what they are aiming for and how to use their targets to improve their day-to-day work. A new approach to marking, which is not yet fully embedded in all classes, ensures that many pupils are given clear guidance on how to improve their work and they are given well-planned opportunities to put this guidance into practice with their teacher's support. In a small number of classes, some pupils are beginning to assess their own work and take the initiative in discussing their problems with the teacher.



The curriculum has improved since the inspection. Pupils' learning in a range of subjects is increasingly enriched by interesting projects, visitors to school and trips to places of interest. A recent visit to a literacy centre, for example, significantly increased the enthusiasm of younger pupils for reading. A 'Spanish Day' greatly increased pupils' understanding of another culture. The school is implementing a new approach to linking subjects around interesting themes in order to increase pupils' motivation for learning, however, this work is at too early a stage to see any significant positive impact.

The school has significantly improved the curriculum for groups of pupils requiring additional support and this is improving their progress. Currently, these groups include pupils who are underachieving, those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The progress of these groups is monitored carefully in order to refine their support where required. Plans are well advanced for extending this approach to looked after children and pupils who are identified as gifted and talented.

Progress since the inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Strengthen the quality and consistency of teaching and the use of assessment – satisfactory
- Ensure the curriculum engages pupils and motivates them to learn – satisfactory

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The recently appointed headteacher provides a very strong drive for school improvement. She effectively combines this drive with providing support and clear guidance to staff and this maintains their high morale and team spirit during the hard work to remove the causes of special measures. The headteacher is well supported by a new deputy headteacher who is making a significant contribution to whole-school leadership. In particular, he has introduced effective methods for gathering and analysing information about pupils' progress, which is enabling the school to be more thorough in evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.

The school is very quickly building its capacity to sustain improvement by developing the role of middle leaders. For example, teachers have recently assumed leadership roles for the Early Years Foundation Stage, behaviour and attendance, literacy, and pupils with additional needs. As a result of their work, pupils' outcomes in each of these areas have improved.

Underpinning the school's improvement is an increasingly robust approach to monitoring and evaluating the school's provision and its impact on pupils' outcomes. Information about the quality of teaching and pupils' learning is systematically gathered from lesson observations, teachers' planning and pupils' work and this is used effectively to provide guidance which helps teachers to improve their work. The



information is also used to inform a school improvement plan which is well focused on the most important priorities for improving standards. Governors are not making a sufficient contribution to the school's evaluation and improvement planning. Since the inspection, the chair has spent more time gathering information about the work of the school, but there has been little improvement in the support, challenge or direction provided by the governing body as a whole. Their work has been hampered by a number of changes in personnel.

The school's approach to promoting community cohesion has improved since the inspection. An audit has been carried out with the support of the local authority; priorities have been identified and a clear plan is in place to tackle them. A key priority is to improve the inclusion of the growing number of children and families from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has made a start on this, but it is too early for any noticeable impact.

The school has gained considerable support this year from parents as a whole because their involvement is encouraged and their views about the school are sought and used in planning improvements. The school has systematic arrangements in place for checking the suitability of all adults who come into contact with pupils, for ensuring all staff receive child protection training and for assessing risks in out-of-school activities.

Progress since the inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure monitoring and evaluation is rigorous, sharply focused on pupils' learning and helps to bring about rapid improvement – good
- Ensure the governing body holds the school to account through challenge, support and setting a clear direction – inadequate
- Develop strategies for promoting community cohesion and evaluate their impact on pupils' understanding of the cultures both in school and the wider world – satisfactory

External support

The local authority's statement of action fulfils requirements. It effectively includes the national Improving Schools Programme and suitably adapts it to the school's needs. The local authority recognises the growing capacity within the school to evaluate the impact of new approaches and to take the initiative in refining them. The new headteacher is well supported in her work by an effective local authority induction programme, including mentoring from an experienced headteacher. Detailed, analytical evaluation by the School Improvement Partner helps the headteacher to be clear about what needs to be tackled in the short term in order to meet the priorities within the school improvement plan.

Priorities for further improvement

- Increase the capacity of the governing body to provide support, challenge and direction to the school.

