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20 July 2010

Ms Kennington  
The Headteacher  
Bradwell Village School  
Walgrave Drive  
Bradwell  
Milton Keynes  
Buckinghamshire  
MK13 9AZ

Dear Ms J Kennington

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Bradwell Village School

Following my visit with Peter Clifton, additional inspector, to your school on 6 and 7 July 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 subject to the following qualifications: appropriate induction and support plans are in place and approved by Ofsted.

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 Milton Keynes.

Yours sincerely

Paul Scott  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Bradwell Village School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 6 and 7 July 2010

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff, governors, a local authority representative and consultants that are working with the school. We also met with groups of pupils.

## Context

The school now has a higher degree of support from the local authority and partnerships with other schools are developing to support progress further. A number of changes to the teaching staff are planned or have taken place already. The School Improvement Partner changed at the beginning of the term.

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

Pupils enjoy learning a great deal. Pupils in Year 6 make progress that is particularly swift and make up some ground lost earlier in the school. Attainment and progress are now tracked carefully with increased accuracy. The greater precision of tracking in mathematics has aided more focused planning and increased progress for pupils. While progress has improved and some individuals make outstanding progress, it still remains too low overall and inconsistent. Assessments from the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is well above average. The school recognises that pupils do not make sufficient progress overall and are capable of much more. It has now started to address the underlying issues in order to raise achievement in all year groups for all groups of pupils.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- raise pupils' achievement, particularly in Years 3 and 4 – satisfactory.

## Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils are very proud of their school and demonstrate an eagerness to engage in learning opportunities. They enjoy positive relationships with staff and are polite, inquisitive and caring. Where teachers build on the prior understanding of individuals and offer real challenge, busy activity results in high rates of progress, feeds the curiosity of pupils and increases enthusiasm. Opportunities are lost when classroom activities do not take account of knowledge and skills that pupils already have. Pupils remain active and continue to cooperate, with only minor deterioration in the behaviour of some after long periods of teacher talk. Pupils readily take on responsibilities within the school community. These include 'Brads Buddies', the

school bank, school council and the 'Eco group'. Pupils contribute a great deal to the positive and supportive atmosphere in the school.

### The effectiveness of provision

The best teaching observed during the visit enables pupils to make outstanding progress at times. Where teachers were more precise about pupils' current understanding and skills, their plans were more informed and clear in targeting learning for each individual. In one lesson, a group of pupils solved mathematics problems by modelling and discussion, testing ideas so that the abstract concepts related to the real world. This active learning consolidated and accelerated learning. Classrooms are bright and welcoming places that celebrate success. Teachers' commitment and hard work are evident and they are becoming increasingly confident in the use of tracking information, although this is at an early stage. Where teaching is less successful, opportunities for individuals to move forward at their own rate are stifled by too much whole-class work and expectations that are too low.

Class teachers build very strong relationships with pupils, teaching a wide range of subjects. There is insufficient support and understanding of some subjects and so learning is inhibited. Teachers provide a great deal of feedback in books for pupils, but this is very time consuming and does not always translate into more effective understanding of the next steps in learning by pupils.

The school has reviewed the curriculum and has already made use of Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) materials to adapt the curriculum and target particular learning in mathematics. The local authority is supporting the school well in this area. Plans are being developed further for September to make the curriculum more coherent.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve the quality of teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement, particularly in Years 3 and 4, by
  - raising expectations of the standards all pupils are capable of attaining – satisfactory
  - ensuring that teaching is based on an accurate assessment of each pupil's performance and is closely matched to their learning needs – satisfactory
  - providing all pupils with clear feedback on what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve their performance - satisfactory
- ensure that the curriculum is covered in sufficient depth to challenge all pupils in all years at the right level and to give stimulating and purposeful opportunities for writing – satisfactory.

## The effectiveness of leadership and management

The school is increasingly aware of its strengths and the key areas for improvement. Leaders have had to focus on making sure the school has the necessary staff. This has been largely achieved with a number of appointments completed recently. Teachers are clear about what is needed but are not as clear about how it will be sustainably achieved. There remains an ambition and enthusiasm to provide the best opportunities for pupils and recognition that a high rate of progress is needed to meet the challenging targets in the action plan. Leaders in the school are increasingly accountable, as are teachers. Monitoring of teaching and learning has highlighted areas for development and plans for the implementation of support are now under consideration.

Governors are committed and passionate about the pupils and school. They recognise that the school has not performed well enough and understand their part in this. Governors support the school in many ways but are not yet offering the degree of strategic support and challenge required to make the rapid rates of progress required. There is much to do now to establish appropriate governance with a clear strategic direction for the school and clear lines of accountability.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- ensure that leaders and managers tackle weaknesses and drive improvement by:
  - holding all leaders and class teachers firmly to account for pupils' learning and progress – satisfactory
  - rigorously evaluating the impact of provision, particularly teaching and the curriculum, on pupils' progress and taking swift action for improvement – satisfactory
  - developing governors' involvement in constructively challenging senior leaders – satisfactory.

## External support

The support for the school to develop teaching through the work within mathematics has been very effective and has had a positive impact that is transferable to other subject areas. The School Improvement Partner has a clear understanding of the school's position and is providing suitable support to move things forward. Informing and involving parents and other stakeholders is recognised by the school as an important factor for success and this process is developing.

## Priorities for further improvement

No further priorities are required as the original areas for development are key to sustained and rapid development of the school