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19 July 2010

Mrs Catherine Taylor  
Advisory Headteacher  
Adisham Church of England Primary School  
The Street  
Adisham  
Kent  
CT3 3JW

Dear Mrs Taylor

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Adisham Church of England Primary School

Following my visit 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 January 2010. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate

Newly Qualified Teachers may not 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 the Governing Body, the Director for Children's Services for Kent and the Director of Education for the Diocese of Canterbury.

Yours sincerely

Chris Kessell  
Additional inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Adisham Church of England Primary School

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

## Evidence

The inspector observed eight lessons or part lessons, scrutinised documents including pupils' work and met with the headteacher, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.

## Context

Since the school was made the subject of special measures there has been a change of leadership. The substantive headteacher left the school and there is an advisory headteacher in post. She has been at the school for three weeks.

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

Work observed in lessons and pupils' books indicates that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is on track to be similar to that found in the past, which is broadly average. The proportion of pupils either reaching or exceeding expected levels has not increased enough. At Key Stage 1, attainment has fallen compared to 2009.

Pupils' work and school data show that pupils are not making sufficient progress, especially at Key Stage 2. A significant minority of pupils have made limited progress, particularly in writing and mathematics. There are variations between the performance of different groups of pupils. Girls often make less progress than boys and too many pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are not making sufficient progress in relation to their starting points. Individual education plans (IEPs) for these pupils now contain sharper targets. However, little reference is made to their specific needs or individual targets in teachers' planning. The IEPs are not used consistently to record pupils' progress against their individual targets. Although the school has systems in place to track pupils' progress, there are inconsistencies in the accuracy of assessments made by teachers about pupils' progress and attainment.

Progress in the area of improvement identified by the inspection in January 2010:

- Raise pupils' attainment and improve pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 – inadequate

## Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils are friendly and welcoming. They are well behaved in lessons and keen to



learn. Pupils get on well with each other. They are considerate and reflect sensibly on issues and ideas presented to them. This was seen to good effect as pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 listened carefully to an assembly about the importance of 'telling the truth'. They were keen to offer their own ideas and listen to those of others. Attendance levels are steadily improving and are above average.

### The effectiveness of provision

Many weaknesses remain in the quality of teaching and a significant number of lessons are still inadequate, especially in Key Stage 2. There is still a long way to go before there is sufficient good teaching to address the history of underachievement that exists at the school. Behaviour management is effective but teachers do not take full advantage of the pupils' positive attitudes to learning when planning and organising lessons.

Lessons are beginning to take account of the wide range of abilities found in the classes. However, although pupils are occupied, learning is often limited. This is because teachers do not pay sufficient attention to pupils' specific knowledge and understanding and then ensure that this accelerates. Activities planned for different ability groups tend to be related to the quantity of work completed or support provided by a teaching assistant. The tasks undertaken are very similar. Pupils' books often show that in too many cases, pupils complete the same tasks so that lower attaining pupils struggle to complete work while the more able undertake activities that are not challenging enough.

Teachers' expectations of the more able pupils are often not high enough. They complete work that they already understand and are not provided with opportunities to take on more challenging activities that they can work at independently. In a number of classes, more able pupils commented that their work was too easy. Teachers' expectations are not always clear. Consequently, pupils of all abilities do not know exactly what they are expected to complete in lessons. This leads to variations in the amount of work completed by the end of a lesson.

Pupils do not have a good enough understanding of their targets. The impact of personalised targets on pupils' learning and progress is limited. Teachers often provide effective oral feedback in lessons but their marking is less helpful. Although comments are normally supportive, there is little guidance on how work can be improved and pupils' progress towards targets. When guidance for improvement is offered, or pupils are requested to attempt work again, these requests are not followed up.

Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills. The standard of writing is a weakness across the school, for example, in subjects such as



science and topic activities. Too often, there is an over-reliance on worksheets and pupils undertaking low level activities, such as colouring rather than improving their skills in English.

Progress in the area of improvement identified by the inspection in January 2010:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning – inadequate

#### The effectiveness of leadership and management

The appointment of an experienced advisory headteacher has increased the knowledge and skills necessary to secure school improvement. In a short period of time, she has communicated her high expectations to staff about pupils' learning and progress and the quality of provision. A new teaching and learning policy has been introduced which clearly identifies what needs to be done to eradicate underachievement and accelerate pupils' progress. Lesson observations have been undertaken which are followed by clear targets for improving the quality of teaching. Clear messages have been given to staff about what is needed to bring about improvement.

Other school leaders vary in their experience and skills. Overall, there is a lack of rigour to bring about sustained improvement. Middle managers have undertaken little monitoring and evaluation of pupil performance and the quality of provision. Future roles and responsibilities are currently being reviewed with a greater emphasis being placed on leaders and managers taking responsibility to improve attainment and progress and the quality of teaching and learning.

Governors are committed to improving the school's effectiveness. They are very supportive but acknowledge that they need to challenge the school more and hold it to account for the performance of pupils. To improve this position, they are embarking on governor training to improve the skills and knowledge of governors, especially their understanding of pupil progress.

Progress in the area of improvement identified by the inspection in January 2010:

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels – inadequate

#### External support

The local authority has produced a statement of action that meets requirements. The implementation of this plan has led to the school and governors receiving additional assistance. For example, a complete audit of English and mathematics provision has been undertaken during the summer term. However, the impact of this



support has been inadequate. For example, the school has not met its targets for pupil progress and the improved percentage of satisfactory and good teaching by June 2010.