

13th October 2005

Mr R Workman  
Beaconside Primary & Nursery School  
Hazel Road  
Rubery  
Birmingham  
B45 9DX

Dear Mr Workman

## **SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF BEACONSIDE PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL**

### **Introduction**

Following my visit with John Collings, additional inspector, to your school on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2005, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in November 2004.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, spoke with the headteacher, chair of governors, local education authority (LEA) link adviser, staff coordinators and managers, and saw fourteen lessons or parts of lessons.

### **Context**

A new chair of governors was appointed in September 2005.

### **Achievement and standards**

Statutory assessment tests in 2005 show that standards at Key Stage 1 have been maintained, and that overall standards at Key Stage 2 show a reasonable improvement from results in 2004. English standards in Year 6 rose significantly, both in respect of average point scores, and in numbers of pupils reaching the

expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. In mathematics the numbers of pupils reaching Level 4 has also risen although numbers of pupils at Level 5 remain low and this is most marked for girls. Standards in science declined from the high values in 2004 but remain broadly average with more pupils gaining higher levels in science than in English or mathematics. Overall, standards achieved in 2005 were satisfactory. However, some weaknesses remain in respect of more able pupils. There has been a fall in the numbers of pupils achieving the higher levels at Key Stage 1, although their progress was nevertheless good when compared to their attainment on entry to the school. Standards in mathematics in Year 6, although improving, are not yet good enough. Pupils with special needs continue to achieve well throughout the school. Their good progress is a testimony to the quality of provision and success of the school's inclusion strategy.

Standards seen in lessons and in current pupils' work are generally as expected for their ages. A very wide range of performance is evident, consistent with the range of abilities of pupils in the school. Not all work is as well presented as it could be, but good opportunities for extended writing were evident throughout the school. Pupils speak very well, and confidently, particularly in the younger years. However, the demand of work provided for some older and more able pupils does not fully develop their potential and is insufficiently challenging.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in November 2004:

- Improve the achievement of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 – satisfactory progress.

### **Personal development and well-being**

The personal development of pupils continues to be a strong feature of the school, beginning with good early years work and developed through consistent care and guidance from all staff. As a result pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning. They try hard to please their teachers and, in turn, teachers work to make lessons enjoyable. There is a safe climate for learning that encourages pupils to attempt challenging tasks. However, pupils are not yet experiencing enough opportunities to develop independent learning skills.

Pupils' behaviour is good. Consistent messages over healthy lifestyles and safe practices begin in the nursery. Attendance continues to be good. Punctuality is good, with both pupils and staff effectively using procedures to deal with latecomers. Staff have all received recent training in updated child protection procedures.

This aspect of the school remains good.

## **Quality of provision**

At the last visit some inadequate teaching was seen. This is no longer the case and the proportion of good teaching has increased. However, there is still insufficient good or better teaching particularly in Key Stage 2. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 three of the four lessons seen were good. In Years 3 and 4 four of the five lessons were good. In Years 5 and 6 all five examples were satisfactory.

Where teaching is good lessons have pace, and expectations of pupils are clear, challenging and matched to their varying needs and abilities. Where teaching is satisfactory work does not consistently challenge, particularly higher attaining pupils, and expectations of what is to be completed in a lesson are not made sufficiently explicit.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported by teaching assistants. Pupils with special educational needs and those in the Mainstream Autism Base are fully included alongside their peers throughout the school.

Assessment is satisfactory and whole-school targets are being set but group or individual targets have not been set for this academic year.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in November 2004:

- Address the variable quality of teaching to bring it up to the level of the best – good progress
- Improve assessment and its use – satisfactory progress.

## **Leadership and management**

The impact of the action to improve standards is beginning to show in improving national test results at Key Stage 2. The leadership of the headteacher in carrying through key elements of the action plan is good. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are robust enough to effect change. Good progress on implementing the staff training elements of the action plan is beginning to ensure staff are better equipped to improve their teaching. For example, staff are becoming more aware of the role assessment plays in planning. Staff report favourably on the training and have a clearer focus on what needs to be done to raise standards. Consistency of practice is developing well. The LEA has delivered its part of the action plan effectively. The headteacher is very aware of strengths and weaknesses within the school. Recent school self-evaluation has effectively identified continuing areas for development.

Subject coordination is satisfactory. Improvements in planning are evident, for example, in mathematics. Good focused intervention for Year 6 pupils was a key factor in raising English standards. There is a good, whole-school, systematic approach to developing the teaching of science investigation skills. Temporary

staffing changes should not compromise short term progress towards raising standards, although close monitoring and support, particularly for middle management roles, should continue.

As a result of good training, staff have accepted the need to differentiate tasks within lessons, the role of formative assessment for learning, and know of the importance of high expectations and challenge particularly for more able pupils. These good practices are not yet always embedded in the day to day experiences, particularly for Years 5 and 6.

The new chair of governors understands the need to offer challenge alongside support and is familiar with the data measures used to give overall performance figures. Governor training is taking place although, as yet, training for the chair has not occurred. A newly constituted Curriculum Committee has begun visiting classrooms, and receiving reports from subject leaders.

The school now meets the statutory requirements for collective worship.

The recent proposal to commission an expert survey to inform fully the preparation of a Disability Discrimination Act access plan should ensure the school has sufficient information.

The school has the capacity to further improve under the good leadership of the headteacher.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in November 2004:

- Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels – satisfactory progress.

### **External support**

The support from the LEA has been good. All staff have received appropriate training. The LEA has arranged external visits for all teaching staff to other schools, to help further raise staff expectations of what pupils can achieve. Networking with neighbouring schools is helping to build esteem within the staff, and the confidence demonstrated by the LEA as to the capacity for the school to improve is an important factor in raising standards.

### **Main Judgements**

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory progress.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory progress.

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1.

**Priorities for further improvement**

- Use assessment information to direct appropriate work to match the different capabilities of pupils.
- Increase challenge and pace in lessons by further raising staff expectations of older pupils

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Education for Worcestershire.

Yours sincerely

Brian Cartwright

**H M Inspector**