



20 February 2006

Mr Peter Bailey  
Headteacher  
Winterbourne Nursery and Infant  
School  
Winterbourne Road  
Thornton Heath  
Surrey  
CR7 7QT

Dear Mr Bailey

## **SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF WINTERBOURNE NURSERY AND INFANT SCHOOL**

### **Introduction**

Following my visit with Charalambos Loizou to your school on 30 and 31 January 2006, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in July 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 and met with the acting headteacher, other staff in positions of responsibility, a group of pupils, the chair of governors and a representative from the Local Authority (LA). Seventeen lessons or parts of lessons, two registrations and an assembly were inspected.

### **Context**

The school has been led by an acting headteacher since the middle of September. A substantive headteacher has been appointed for the start of the summer term. The coordinator for the Foundation Stage, who was also

the coordinator for literacy, left at the end of last term. The management of the Foundation Stage is being dealt with on a temporary basis by the acting headteacher and the deputy headteacher is coordinating literacy in the short term.

### **Achievement and standards**

Standards in lessons remain below the expected levels. Very few examples were seen of pupils exceeding expectations and the more able pupils do not make enough progress. Overall the pupils' learning is hampered by a legacy of weak skills in basic areas such as listening, speaking and writing. Although progress is improving in some individual lessons, this has not led to sustained gains in learning over time.

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

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics - inadequate progress

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

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved. They were good in nine lessons, satisfactory in seven and inadequate in one. Restless behaviour was only seen when learning was not challenging enough. The pupils behaved well at break-times and assembly. Teachers and support staff have good relationships with the pupils who say they enjoy school. Two pupils have been the subject of fixed term exclusions since the start of the school year; missing four and a half days and three and a half days respectively. These figures are high for a school of this type. While planning for the needs of these pupils, and others at risk of exclusion, is satisfactory, the implementation of the plans lacks consistency.

The school has introduced good initiatives to involve the pupils in the life of the school. For example, the formation of a school council is helping the pupils learn to share the responsibility for making their school better. Fruit time in the nursery helps the pupils to learn about healthy eating choices and Year 1 and 2 pupils were able to explain the importance of taking exercise.

The assembly seen supported the pupils' moral, social and spiritual development effectively. They attended well to the messages contained because the format of the assembly encouraged their participation.

Attendance remains unsatisfactory, as at the time of the last monitoring inspection, because authorised absence is too high. Recent efforts to improve attendance through better monitoring and by contacting parents have not made an impact.

### **Quality of provision**

Of the lessons seen, eleven were satisfactory, four were good and two were inadequate. This represents a reasonable improvement since the last monitoring inspection. The teaching is broadly satisfactory and is having a positive effect on the pupils' personal development, their behaviour and attitudes to learning. The teachers' planning has improved and most lessons are supported by appropriate objectives for learning. Although there is now less inadequate teaching, improvements in the proportion of good teaching have been marginal and there remains too little good or better teaching to accelerate achievement in the long term.

In the better lessons, the pace and challenge offered is well considered to meet the pupils' needs and they learn well. Tasks are purposeful, engaging and include the effective use of questions to share and extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Good use is made of "talk partners", a feature of the lessons which the pupils enjoy. Both teachers and support staff intervene decisively to support the pupils. Appropriate time is given to helping individuals and groups so they are clear about what to do and how best to improve their work.

Where teaching and learning are less effective the introductions to lessons are overly laboured; pupils sit passively for too long and the discussions are not productive enough. There is insufficient consideration for how pupils of varying attainment levels will learn best and the pace of learning is uneven. While planned tasks broadly match the needs of the pupils, insufficient thought is given to developing precisely focused activities to hasten progress at all levels. In these lessons the work given to more able pupils is not challenging enough.

Teaching assistants provide good support in English and mathematics, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and those in the early stages of learning English. Their support in other subjects it is not comprehensive or consistent enough.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly in English and mathematics. They respond positively to the pupils' efforts but marking rarely provides specific guidance for improvement in ways the pupils understand.

As at the time of the previous monitoring inspection, assessment systems are satisfactory but are not used rigorously to inform teachers' planning. There has been some improvement in the way attainment is tracked, including an analysis of the relative performance of different ethnic groups. However assessment and target setting in English and mathematics is not accurate enough to enable achievement to be measured. Display in the school celebrates the pupils' work and suitably reflects their diverse cultures and backgrounds. Nevertheless it is not used well enough to stimulate pupils and provide them with examples of what constitutes good work.

There have been satisfactory improvements to planning in the reception year. There is good provision in the nursery and new assessment systems here are beginning to be adopted in the reception year but are not consistently applied across all classes. Teachers in the nursery and reception years record the pupils' progress but assessments are not always accurate enough to give a clear picture of their attainment as they move into Year 1.

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

- Improve the provision of education in the Reception classes - satisfactory progress
- Improve all pupils' achievement by raising the overall quality of teaching through Years 1 and 2 - satisfactory progress

### **Leadership and management**

The leadership and management of the school are inadequate overall although there have been improvements in focused aspects of the work of the leadership team. The acting headteacher has provided a measure of stability at a time of change through improving communication at all levels. He has enhanced the morale of his colleagues and engendered a more positive approach to school improvement. The learning environment is better as are procedures for ensuring the pupils' health and safety. Appropriate work is taking place to effect the transfer of leadership to the substantive headteacher.

The acting headteacher has implemented a satisfactory programme of lesson monitoring. The judgements made are mainly accurate. Appropriate feedback has been given to staff, resulting in improvements in the quality of teaching. The acting headteacher has worked well with senior colleagues to clarify their roles and responsibilities in the short term. He recognises that some job descriptions are now out of date and that the deputy headteacher, having taken on the leadership of literacy, now has too many areas of direct responsibility. The appointment of coordinators for the foundation subjects has strengthened the school's leadership capacity. Coordination of support for minority ethnic pupils is developing well although there are variations in the quality of these pupils' experiences in the classroom. The outcomes from meetings between senior staff are recorded and reviewed regularly; they appropriately identify who is responsible for what.

The monitoring and evaluation of the school's work as a whole remains a weakness. The acting headteacher's evaluation of progress focuses too much on developments in provision rather than on outcomes for pupils. The coordinators for literacy and numeracy, whilst able to provide an analysis of the pupils' attainment, do not make enough reference to assessment data or other systematic analysis of achievement. This prohibits the identification both of patterns in the pupils' progress within subjects and of differential rates of progress by groups of pupils. These underlying weaknesses in evaluation hamper the setting of meaningful priorities within strategic improvement planning. Whilst literacy, numeracy, Physical education and information and communications technology have development plans, the relationship of these to the overall action plan is unclear.

Finances are secure in the short term; a positive out-turn is forecast for the end of this financial year. However the school has not planned in the longer term for the forecast fall in pupil numbers or the impact of new national arrangements for teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payments.

Staff development is satisfactory. The school makes good use of external support provided by the LA but remains dependent on that support in order to move forward.

Governance has improved and is satisfactory. The governors have played an appropriate role in the appointment of the new headteacher. They now make better use of assessment data to challenge the school over the pupils' attainment and have a reasonable understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision. Their understanding of achievement lacks depth and too little use is made of assessment data to ask questions about the pupils' progress over time.

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

- Improve the focus of leadership to ensure there is a clear impact on whole school improvement - satisfactory progress

### **External support**

The LA continues to provide well targeted support for the school and to monitor its impact accurately. It has acted decisively, in conjunction with the governors, to secure the long term leadership and management of the school.

### **Main Judgements**

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Raise levels of attendance

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen Long  
**H M Inspector**