

29 February 2008

Miss J Lloyd-Williams
Headteacher
Thorne Moorends West Road Primary School
West Road
Moorends
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN8 4LH

Dear Miss Lloyd-Williams

**SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF THORNE MOORENDS
WEST ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Following my visit with Amraz Ali HMI and Naila Zaffar, Additional Inspector, to your school on 27 and 28 February, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in January 2007. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report 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.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, and the Director of Education Standards for Doncaster.

Yours sincerely



John Young
Her Majesty's Inspector

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF THORNE MOORENDS WEST ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the third monitoring inspection: 27 and 28 February 2008

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, visited lessons, and scrutinised documents. Discussions took place with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the inclusion manager, a forum of teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and pupils. Inspectors also spoke with representatives from the governing body and the local authority (LA).

Context

Since the last visit, a Key Stage 1 teacher has left the school and been replaced by a supply teacher. The teaching and learning manager post remains vacant as the school failed to find a suitable candidate following recent interviews. In addition, a teacher in the Nursery has resigned, following a lengthy absence.

Achievement and standards

In 2008, the school continues to build on the improved pupil progress acknowledged during the last monitoring visit. Across the school, more and more pupils are beginning to make satisfactory or better progress. However, inconsistencies remain within and across year groups, and progress in writing remains stubbornly slow, despite high levels of remedial work in the school and from LA consultants. Given these inconsistencies, the school is paying particular attention to those pupils and classes who are slow moving and in regression. The picture from lesson observations is also encouraging; in the vast majority of lessons, pupils made satisfactory and sometimes good progress against lesson objectives.

Significant work has gone into rationalising the use of data in school. Because of this more coherent approach, the validity and reliability of the school's assertion about pupils' progress is much improved. Through systematic collection and analysis of comparative data, the school is now in a position to demonstrate those pupils on target and those falling behind. The introduction of progress meetings and the teaching and learning group provide managers with good opportunities to hold staff to account for pupils' progress, and act as useful forums to discuss and offer solutions for those pupils unlikely to meet their targets. Focused planning and improving consistency in the quality of teaching are helping to boost pupils' learning. Support from LA consultants has accelerated pupils' overall progress and had greatest impact in reading.

Progress on the area for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2007:

- Drive up standards – satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They demonstrate this by taking part enthusiastically in all aspects of school life. This includes acting as playground leaders, older pupils mentoring younger pupils and their involvement on school and class councils. They are keen to learn and establish good relationships with staff, which helps to ensure a happy and harmonious school community. Pupils' behaviour remains good and there have been no exclusions this academic year.

Pupils' attendance continues to rise and has improved since the time of the last visit. The school has had a successful whole-school focus on attendance and punctuality through its 'Early Risers Club'. This has led to increased numbers of pupils with 100% attendance and punctuality, which is celebrated through assemblies. Each week the school displays the attendance rates for each class and pupils take pride in their class's good or improving attendance. Consequently, pupils encourage each other to come to school and to avoid unnecessary absence. Parents are increasingly aware of the importance of good attendance. However, a minority of parents persist in taking children out of school for term-time holidays.

Progress on the area for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2007:

- Improve attendance— satisfactory.

Quality of provision

The provision in the Foundation Stage remains good overall. Children respond well to the warm welcome provided by the staff and the well laid out, stimulating environment for learning. Children's behaviour and enjoyment of learning are good. Teaching and learning are good. Planning includes clear progression, differentiation and opportunities for assessment. Children use computers with confidence and respect. Children enjoy the well-planned outdoor activities. Staff use the 'High Scope' method of working to encourage children to plan their work, take part in activities and to review their learning. Relationships are strong and staff plan effectively a range of activities to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The quality of teaching and learning continues to become more consistent across the school. However, there remain occasions where teaching is not good enough. Inspectors agree with the school that this inconsistency in the quality of teaching means that progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy continues to be patchy. Pupils respond well to teaching, when good relationships are established and teachers use a range of learning approaches to stimulate their interest, and which link well to, and extend their prior learning. They are eager to demonstrate their learning and enjoy the probing questions some staff ask. Teachers mark work regularly and conscientiously. However, marking remains more effective in some classes and across some subjects, and there is further room for improvement. The school continues to support teachers in improving their skills and staff benefit from training, mentoring, and guidance to hone their existing skills. There has been

effective support from LA consultants to aid this process. The deployment and effectiveness of teaching assistants has improved, and they provide invaluable support to pupils within and outside of lessons, particularly those with additional needs. A new provision map has been developed to help the school to coordinate the support it gives to individuals and groups. The school's own reviews, alongside those of the local authority review teams confirm an improving overall picture in the quality of teaching and learning.

The school, with the support of key partners including the LA, continues to take effective steps to improve the provision for literacy. Guided reading is well established in all classes. All teachers plan from the renewed framework with increasing success. Ongoing work with the LA literacy consultant has involved targeted support to demonstrate effective teaching of word and sentence level work. Classroom observations and work scrutiny has helped to identify areas for further development in the teaching of writing across the school. The literacy coordinator, together with the teaching and learning group, has put together a clear development and support programme for all staff. Teaching assistants have also attended training to enable them to better support children's learning through the national strategies. The school continues to build the capacity to coach, support and demonstrate good practice in order to improve literacy further.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2007:

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils of all capabilities are fully challenged and understand how to improve their work— satisfactory.
- Improve curricular arrangements for literacy and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities— satisfactory.

Leadership and management

The headteacher continues to provide strong leadership and to fuel the momentum to take the school forward. Her senior management team support her effectively, as increasingly do middle leaders. Her commitment to securing improvement has earned the respect of staff who remain fully behind her and equally as committed to enhancing the overall quality of education the school provides. She continues to systematically roll out the key strands of the school improvement strategy, and where necessary has refined systems to aid efficiency. The improvement measures introduced are slowly beginning to show impact, and the school is making headway against all the key issues, although some more than others. The school is becoming increasingly proactive in shaping its destiny, and in demanding appropriate support from the local authority.

The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. There is a noticeable improvement in the learning climate and the factors that underpin good pupil achievement. Attendance is very high profile, as are attempts to drive up standards. Equally, the curriculum is being refined to better match the needs and interests of all children and bridge the gap in lost learning. The staffing situation remains relatively stable and only one vacancy now exists. The pace of developments over the past term means the school is no longer failing to meet the timelines for completion of key tasks. The

headteacher continues to work effectively to engage with parents and get them to accept their responsibility as key partners in reinforcing the work of the school. Governors offer a wealth of appropriate experience and know the school well. Their ambitions for the school ensure that they hold senior managers to account. In particular, the development of a governor strategy group provides them with a platform to contribute effectively to the schools improvement planning.

Progress on the area for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2007:

- establish stable staffing arrangements – satisfactory.

External support

The school continues to receive a high level of support from the LA to tackle the identified issues. This includes consultant support to develop further the quality of teaching and learning, support the growth and effectiveness of middle managers and to monitor and evaluate the impact of provision in all aspects of the school's work.

Priorities for further improvement

- The priorities for further improvement continue to be the key issues previously identified by the last inspection.