

3 July 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 Marie Cordey and Les Schubeler, Additional Inspectors, to your school on 1 and 2 July, 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 January 2007. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers may 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 fourth monitoring inspection: 1 and 2 July 2008

Evidence

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

Context

Since the last visit, the school has resolved its staffing issues. They have filled the vacant teaching and learning manager post. This member of staff is already working in the school, having secured an early release from her previous employers. The teaching and learning manager will eventually take over the class of the teacher for the Years 3 and 4 class, who retires in September. In addition a new nursery teacher is in place, following the resignation of the previous post holder and the school have also secured the services of a new Key Stage 1 teacher, who starts in September.

Achievement and standards

The school's tracking system reveals that the majority of pupils in school are currently making expected and, in some cases, accelerated progress. Provisional Key Stage 1 results indicate an overall improvement on the standards attained in 2007. However, assessment information does show a further decline in writing with results well below the school's own target. The quality of boys' writing remains a particular concern across the school. Similarly, boys' reading levels, although rising, remain well below that of girls. At Key Stage 2 the predicted national tests results are very encouraging and if realised would represent significant improvement on the 2007 figures. For example, Year 6 pupils are expected to reach above average standards in science. Given the below average starting point of these pupils, this would represent good progress. However, there are some concerns over the reliability of assessments, particularly in terms of the validity of the initial assessments, as this potentially exaggerates the extent of progress made by pupils. Nevertheless, the overall picture from lesson observations and work scrutiny is heartening: in the vast majority of lessons, pupils are making good progress against lesson objectives. The school is using data effectively to plan learning, determine pupil progress and recognise where additional support is needed. Pupil progress meetings now have a sharper focus on the relative performance of different groups of pupils and refining the strategies used to drive up standards.

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

- Drive up standards – satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Pupils continue to enjoy school and speak enthusiastically about the 'fun' lessons staff provide. They talk proudly of their increasing involvement in their learning. They feel the introduction of measures such as target files, wall posters and discussions with teachers about their work are helping them to understand how well they are progressing. They believe behaviour has improved over the last year and are adamant that bullying is not an issue. The school continues to make use of, and add to, measures designed to improve the rate of attendance. The latest figures show a good improvement compared to last year, even though the problem of term-time holidays for some pupils persists. Pupils' sustained appreciation of the rewards for good attendance and their enjoyment of the inter-class competitive element, in the chase for prizes, contribute greatly to the improvement. Pupils' positive responses to the school's efforts have been a significant factor in developing a heightened awareness of the value of regular attendance among some parents.

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

- Improve attendance – good.

Quality of provision

Positive relationships between pupils and staff, improved delivery, greater consistency and a sharper focus on progress, underpin continuing improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good: they work hard and want to do well. Staff now use a common framework for planning and delivering their lessons. There is a growing trend for staff to provide learning activities that are customised to ensure pupils of all abilities develop appropriately. Learning is enhanced by appropriate and well utilised resources and the good contribution made by teaching assistants. Staff regularly check pupils' progress and are using this information to set targets for improvement. Learning intentions and success criteria are now regularly shared with pupils and this helps to keep them focused. However, the school acknowledges that more needs to be done to promote independence in pupils' learning. The marking of pupils' work is showing more consistency. Staff give pupils constructive guidance on how to improve their work. This advice, coupled with records of progress in their target files, gives pupils more confidence to assess their own strengths and weaknesses.

Some effective steps are being taken to improve the provision for literacy. Reading, in particular, has improved because of the success of the guided reading programme. The school has accurately identified writing as a further area for improvement, especially for boys. An emphasis on pupils' speaking and listening skills is beginning to make pupils more confident as well as ensuring writing is more varied and meaningful. However, there are insufficient computers in classrooms for pupils to word-process their writing, so that they can see the effects of presentation. Teaching assistants are generally involved in planning lessons as well as supporting the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Efficient coordination of this support has resulted in the school making a swift response to clearly identified needs. Tailored support in reading, for example, has not only

improved pupils' standards but has also captured their interest and engagement in the written word. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to receive more focused curricular targets and benefit from more challenging lessons. There are plans to further refine support but this has yet to take effect.

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 – good.
- Improve curricular arrangements for literacy and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities – satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Skilful management ensures the school radiates a very positive ethos. It is a welcoming place. Morale is high and pupils are happy. A good climate for learning has been fostered, which pupils respond to with excellent attitudes to learning and exemplary behaviour. The headteacher is working tirelessly to improve all aspects of the schools work. She is well supported by her deputy headteacher, who is equally committed to enhancing the schools' effectiveness. Middle managers and school staff remain fully behind them and are demonstrating considerable dedication and resilience to sustain the momentum of improvement. Well-conceived improvement plans are being further refined and the school is successfully addressing the key issues previously highlighted. For example, attendance has improved from below, to in line with, national average and the quality of teaching and learning is enhanced, with a higher proportion of good or better teaching observed. The curriculum also continues to evolve. Importantly there are positive indications that pupils' progress is much improved. Staffing issues have been resolved and there are no vacant posts. The results of a parents' survey demonstrate their overwhelming support for the school and satisfaction with the way the school tries to engage them in their child's learning. Governors continue to undertake their duties judiciously. They offer support but also challenge the school to secure the necessary improvements.

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

- establish stable staffing arrangements – good.

External support

The school continues to benefit from a high degree of LA support, which is effectively supporting the improvement process.

Priorities for further improvement

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