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25 February 2009

Mr G Civil  
Headteacher  
Winyates Primary School  
Orton Goldhay  
Peterborough  
Cambridgeshire  
PE2 5RF

Dear Mr Civil

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Winyates Primary School

Following my visit with Michael Miller, Additional Inspector, to your school on 10 and 11 February 2009, 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 November 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.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Children's Services for Peterborough.

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave us and to the pupils who spoke to us so keenly and sensibly about their work and achievements.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor  
H M Inspector  
Special measures: monitoring of Winyates Primary School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 10 and 11 February 2009

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and the pupils' work. They observed lessons and met with the headteacher, key members of staff, groups of pupils, governors and representatives from the local authority (LA).

## Context

The school has entered a period of greater stability following a series of significant staffing difficulties. Plans are at an advanced stage for further development of the accommodation, most of which will take place during the summer.

## Achievement and standards

The school's drive to raise standards in English is starting to succeed. Standards remain below average overall in English, but there is extensive school data which shows that pupils in Year 6 have made good progress from the well below average standards they recorded when they were in Year 2 to standards that are currently closer to the national average. However, the school is just starting to collect and analyse data on more vulnerable groups, and this is showing such pupils are not yet making the same progress as others. The legacy of past underachievement, variability in the achievement of different year groups and staffing difficulties are still working their way through the school, but the impact is gradually lessening.

Marking in English is helping raise standards, particularly for older pupils in Years 5 and 6. It is increasingly helpful for pupils, particularly regarding spelling where standards remain weak. Programmes to support pupils with their reading are gaining momentum. In Years 2 and 6 over 70% of pupils appear likely to meet national expectations by the end of the academic year. However, the sustainability of such improvements has still to be demonstrated. Standards overall in writing are weaker. Work seen in Year 1 showed pupils starting to come to grips satisfactorily with identifying the key features of a piece of text, such as headings, labels and diagrams. This is evidence that the good achievement of children in Reception is now being consolidated when they move to Key Stage 1. In a Year 5/6 lesson, pupils were making sound progress in their work on persuasive language and understand the need to balance fact and opinion in their work. Potentially higher attaining Year 6 pupils show lively and thoughtful writing in their recent work. However, although improving, the writing of middle and lower attaining pupils still shows some limitations as to their ability to sustain creative ideas in extended work.

Standards in mathematics are improving. There is a consistent rise in the percentage of children on track to meet age related expectations by the end of Year 6. From their well-below average starting points this represents good progress. Across all

subjects there is a significant gap between the achievement of boys and that of the girls.

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

- Raise standards in English – satisfactory.

#### Personal development and well-being

Pupils have a very positive attitude to their learning. They participate well in discussions and are quick to help and support their classmates. Relationships are good and behaviour in lessons contributes well to the learning. Pupils recognise and appreciate the many improvements that have been made and the way their teachers use a range of strategies to make lessons fun. The recently formed school parliament has given pupils a real voice in influencing the development of the school. It is also successfully raising aspirations. Pupils demonstrate a growing ability to empathise with others and consider moral issues. Exclusions have fallen dramatically and the pupils were clear that the bullying that once existed has been largely eradicated. Attendance is now satisfactory and is still improving as a result of rigorous and structured systems to support parents or take firm action as necessary.

#### Quality of provision

The overall quality of teaching and learning continues to improve. The school has developed a clear understanding among all teachers of what makes a good lesson, but some are more skilled at putting this into practice. Consequently, good teaching is still not consistent across both key stages. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, and the school is very close to achieving its target of ensuring that 70% of lessons are consistently good or better by Easter. The systematic approach to assessment, seen at the last monitoring visit, continues to have a positive impact. Improved planning and tracking is enabling more relevant targets to be set for pupils on an individual, group or whole class basis. Pupils have a better, and more informed, understanding as to what are their next steps in learning. Teaching strategies which use probing questions and challenge the pupils to explain their thinking are being more commonly applied across all year groups. This is raising the expectations of both staff and pupils.

Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to learning by supporting pupils who find learning more difficult and helping them to express their ideas. In addition, they help the class teacher to monitor other aspects of progress. The consistently applied process whereby they annotate a copy of the lesson plan to provide feedback for class teachers greatly assists the drive to meet individual needs. Where teaching is good, there is a good pace to activities, and teachers are increasingly trusting their instincts and recognising when pupils are ready to 'fly' and explore their tasks

independently. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers tend to be more cautious and the pace of learning, particularly for higher attaining pupils, drops a little.

As the school develops its curriculum, teachers are identifying more opportunities to make links between subjects. This was particularly evident in well considered links being made between literacy and design and technology, and mathematics and geography in respect of map-work. The revised Key Stage 1 curriculum is helping pupils to move successfully from the Foundation Stage. The school now needs to consider how to support further the transition to the demands of the national curriculum and Year 2 work, for example by the phased introduction of more whole-class teaching. The introduction of the SEAL programmes is having a very positive impact on pupils' personal development. There are more opportunities for extra-curricular activities and extended learning. Staff and governors give generously of their time to support such activities and to working with the local community. The learning environment and themed displays are also promoting learning and pupils' awareness of different subjects.

The school has successfully established coherent systems to coordinate the care and support for all vulnerable groups of children. Roles and responsibilities have been restructured and the school has strengthened links with outside agencies and with families. Increasingly pupils know their targets and what they need to do to move to the next level. However they are less secure in their understanding of their longer term targets and aspirations for what they should or could achieve.

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

- Accelerate pupils' rate of progress in learning with higher expectations for achievement, greater pace and a higher level of challenge in lessons for all groups of learners – good.

### Leadership and management

The school monitors its work rigorously and consistently, using evidence from a range of sources on the progress that individual pupils are making. This has enabled the school's leaders to address weaknesses in teaching with great success. Since the last visit the quality of teaching has continued to improve. A climate of professional aspiration is developing, where teachers are keen to discuss their lessons and very ready to act on suggestions for further improvements. Regular meetings between class teachers and the school's leaders ensure they are supported to analyse the data the school collects on the children in their classes and challenged to seek out and address any underachievement. Subject leaders are becoming more skilful and confident in monitoring the work in their areas. Governors fulfil their role as critical friends with increasing expertise. They have taken advantage of a wealth of training to build their knowledge and understanding and systematically seek out first hand evidence of the school's work. They are well placed to take an active part in the

school's increasingly sharp self-evaluation. Support staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and their performance is monitored regularly. The headteacher and governors are developing a clear vision for future developments amongst leaders at all levels. There is a growing capacity to improve as new processes become embedded and progress in raising standards sustained.

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

- Eradicate inadequate teaching through rigorous monitoring and evaluation reinforced by swift and decisive action – good
- Sharpen self-evaluation with a clear focus on how well pupils are learning – good

#### External support

The school speaks highly of the support provided by the local authority and the impact is evident in the improved quality of teaching and increased confidence of middle leaders. Evidence of the impact of the support provided by consultants and the school's improvement adviser is being gathered and analysed consistently. This will be of increasing importance to the school as it moves towards greater independence. There is a well planned exit strategy in place to provide continuing support and challenge when the school is eventually removed from the category of concern.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- Create more opportunities to share the good and outstanding features of teaching across the school.
- Develop strategies to enable pupils to see the longer term objectives for their journey in learning.