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29 April 2015

Mrs Fiona Todd  
Executive Headteacher  
Bunbury Aldersey CE Primary School  
School Lane  
Bunbury  
Tarporley  
Cheshire  
CW6 9NR

Dear Mrs Todd

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Bunbury Aldersey CE Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 28 April 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

This visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in February 2015.

### **Evidence**

At the start of my visit you and one of your colleagues accompanied me on a tour of the school. This gave me the opportunity to familiarise myself with the school site and make short visits to lessons to see the pupils at work. I held meetings with you and the interim deputy headteacher, the deputy headteacher who has specific responsibility for achievement and a charming, articulate group of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils who readily shared with me their opinions about the school. I held separate meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the Church of England Diocese of Chester and I had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I evaluated the school development plan and the local authority's statement of action. I considered a number of documents

relating to safeguarding and risk assessment and evaluated the work in a sample of pupils' books.

## **Context**

Since the previous inspection the headteacher and deputy headteacher have been absent from school. To ensure stability and continuity of senior leadership the local authority and governing body acted quickly to secure the services of you and the interim deputy headteacher, on a temporary basis, to lead the school.

## **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

Senior leaders have taken swift action to address the area for improvement, identified by inspectors at the previous inspection, about pupils' safety. The school reports that all staff have now undertaken statutory training in 'Awareness of child abuse and neglect' and that appropriate staff have undertaken additional training in how to make referrals to outside agencies should a child be discovered to be at risk of harm. As a result, the possibility that staff may fail to identify concerns about a child's safety and then not act on these concerns, have been minimised. Further, senior leaders have introduced more robust systems for keeping records related to safeguarding, which are now in line with local authority guidelines.

Issues related to site safety, pinpointed by inspectors at the previous inspection, have been addressed. Cars are no longer parked on the school site, where they presented a hazard to pupils during break and lunchtime. Pupils now enter and leave the school site, at the beginning and end of the school day, using a specific route which is supervised by staff. As a result, the site is safer and more secure.

Senior leaders have introduced much greater rigour to assessing the risks associated with various school events, for example, school trips. Further, they have put in place systems for quality assuring these risk assessments to ensure that they are fit for purpose, alert staff to the hazards associated with a particular activity and so minimise the risk to pupils' health and safety. However, you and your colleagues accept that this is work in progress and that more needs to be done to ensure that a complete portfolio of risk assessments is in place to cover the range of potentially hazardous activities involving pupils and members of staff.

Senior leaders have taken effective steps to improve pupils' behaviour during playtime and lunchtime, which are making it much more consistent with the high standards of behaviour observed in lessons. Pupils who I spoke with reported that increasing the area for them to play in, for example, by giving over the field to those pupils who play football enabling other pupils full use of the playground, has reduced the instances of pupils getting in each other's way and, as a consequence, decreased the number of accidents. The pupils also confirmed that there are more staff on yard

duty during break and lunchtime, further improving site safety. Those pupils spoken to also reported that the new system of rewards and sanctions emphasises the school's high expectations for their behaviour. As a result, pupils' conduct is improving, not only in outdoor play areas but also around the school.

Evidence from the work in the books I scrutinised supports the findings of inspectors at the previous inspection, which is that teachers' marking is effective in promoting pupils' progress.

On your appointment to the school, you used the findings of the inspection and your own evaluation of how well the school was doing to rewrite the school development plan. The plan is detailed, it makes clear what the priorities for improvement are and the actions that need to be taken to improve the school. Measures of success, as appropriate, are quantified and the costs associated with implementing the plan are considered. However, the plan does not always make clear who is accountable for each of the actions in it and it is not clear how the plan will be managed in terms of its implementation. For example, it is not always obvious when planned improvement activities will start and when they will be considered to have been completed. Although the plan has milestones, which senior leaders and governors can use to gauge the progress the school is making against each improvement priority, these are often descriptions of actions having been completed rather than measures of their impact. Nevertheless, the plan is effectively informing your work to improve the school.

The local authority has worked effectively with the school since the previous inspection. The local authority's safeguarding children in education settings' team, has worked with staff to tighten systems for ensuring pupils are kept as safe as possible. Further, senior leaders have worked effectively with the local authority risk management team to sharpen the school's procedures for assessing risk. As required by the findings of the previous inspection, the local authority has completed the review of the governing body and, as a consequence, an interim executive board will be taking over responsibility for governing the school.

The local authority's statement of action, written in response to the inspection findings, is compliant with Ofsted's requirements; however, it could be sharper. Arrangements for quality assuring the actions being taken to improve the school are not always clear. Some of the success criteria lack precision and a number of timescales are not sharp enough. There also needs to be greater clarity about how the school's governors and the trustees will be involved in any decisions about the school's future.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's development plan is fit for purpose.

As the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement were judged good at the previous inspection the school may appoint newly qualified teachers. However, this is on condition that they receive high quality support from a trained mentor and are given regular opportunities to observe good to outstanding practice. This decision will be reviewed at the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Education Committee of The Haberdashers' Livery Company of London, the Director of Education for the Church of England Diocese of Chester, the Director of Children's Services for Cheshire East and the Chair of the Governing Body. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Charles Lowry  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**