

## **Local Authority Statement Action**

### **Millfield Primary School**

**Date of Inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

Millfield Primary School was inspected under Section 5 arrangements on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> February 2011. It was placed in Special Measures.

The target date for removal of Special Measures is March 2013.

### **Options considered by the Local Authority**

#### **a) Scope for closure or federation**

Millfield Primary School is an average-sized primary school. There are currently two Reception classes and seven mixed-age classes throughout the rest of the school. The school is situated in the village of Littleport a few miles from the small city of Ely and serves the local village and rural community.

There are only two primary schools that serve the village of Littleport, and no other schools that would allow parents easy access for school places. The school is in the catchment area of the City of Ely secondary school, and all six feeder schools are experiencing demographic pressure on school places, so the Authority has no other local school to send these pupils to, should closure be considered as an option.

Both of the primary schools in Littleport are experiencing pressure for Reception places. In November 2010, the number on roll at the school was 243, while the overall capacity is 280. The school has a Published Admission Number of 40, but in September 2010, the school agreed to over-admit for in-catchment children, and took 48 children into Reception, due to the high demand for places in the village.

For September 2011, the Authority has so far received 39 x 1st preference applications for the 40 places at the school, and 29 x 2nd preference applications (but no 3rd preference applications). There will no doubt also be late applications and applications from additional children who move into the area.

The projections for the next three years for Millfield School rise for two more years before a small drop, but the number of children living in the catchment area remains above the school PAN of 40. Projections for the other primary school follow the same pattern as well, high demand, above PAN for three more years.

2012	46
2013	49
2014	44

On balance, the analysis of available pupil places at better performing schools, within reasonable, safe travelling distance of Millfield Primary School indicates the closure of the school would be inappropriate at the current time.

#### **b) Scope for support from partner organisations**

The Local Authority will commission support from a neighbouring successful school to provide monitoring and coaching support for the teachers and leadership support for the Headteacher. Further leadership support will be commissioned by the appointment of two Advisory Governors who will provide advice and support to the Governing Body and mentoring support for the Chair of Governors. We are confident that this level of support from a partner organisation, together with targeted support from the Local Authority, will promote steady recovery so that the school will no longer be subject to special measures in line with the timeframe provided.

#### **c) Local Authority intervention powers**

The Local Authority does not consider it necessary to replace the governing body with an Interim Executive Board, but will provide support from a Governor Services Officer. The two Advisory Governors will provide additional support and advice.

The desired outcomes will be:

- the development of an efficient governing body, able to work autonomously;
- the implementation, by the governing body, of an effective system of challenge, monitoring and evaluation;
- the governors, with support from the Local Authority, will put in place systems and structures to monitor the progress, implementation and impact of the action plan.

The governing body receives regular budget information from the school finance officer and the quality of financial planning is satisfactory. At this stage, therefore, the Local Authority does not intend to suspend the governing body's right to a delegated budget. However, the Local Authority will continue to monitor the implementation of agreed actions and reserves the right to remove the right to a delegated budget should this become necessary in the future

### **The Local Authority's approach to securing improvement at Millfield Primary School**

#### **a) Contextual information including action taken so far**

Millfield Primary School is situated in the village of Littleport a few miles from the small city of Ely and serves the local village and rural community.

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disability is average and there are fewer than average numbers of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Children enter the school with standards that

are broadly in line with national expectations although communication, language and literacy and calculating skills are weaker areas.

In September 2007 Ofsted judged that the school was satisfactory with a satisfactory capacity to improve and the Local Authority placed the school at a medium+ level of causing concern. The school remained at this category receiving additional support which included a combination of an additional Local Authority Inspector, Local Authority English and Mathematics Consultants and participation in the Improving Schools Programme (ISP) throughout the next three years. In June 2010 and following concerns over the school's predicted outcomes for KS2 in 2010 which were significantly lower than originally targeted and close to floor targets, the LA undertook a review focused on Leadership and Management. Following confirmation of outcomes for 2010, the school was moved to a Red category indicating the highest level of priority.

### **Current Action and additional support**

The Local Authority is working with the Headteacher and Governors to draw up an action plan to provide support and challenge for the school and to ensure that there is appropriate monitoring and evaluation of the progress the school is making. This action plan will include the input of a range of professionals and be co-ordinated by a Local Authority Inspector (LAI) to ensure that that it is relevant, clear and specific in addressing all the issues identified in the Ofsted report. These priorities are:

- Priority 1: Raise attainment, particularly for the most able pupils in English and mathematics across Years 1 to 6
- Priority 2: Improve the quality of teaching
- Priority 3: Strengthen the monitoring of teaching and learning
- Priority 4: Improve attendance

The Local Authority Inspector will attend the Strategic Implementation Group (see below) to provide continuity of support and advice and review evidence of

- 1) the impact of Local Authority support
- 2) the progress the school is making to address the agreed priorities.

The Local Authority Standards and Effectiveness 3-11 Team will continue to strengthen management systems and provide support from Literacy and mathematics consultants. Half termly, end of term and end of year progress meetings matched to the Raising Attainment Plan (RAP) will hold the school to account for good quality teaching and good pupil progress in English and Mathematics. ISP will continue to support the development of stronger management systems whilst Literacy and Mathematics consultants will support the development of quality first teaching and learning in the classrooms.

The development of strong management systems and quality first learning and teaching will be further supported by a partnership with a successful local primary school.

The plan also includes bespoke packages of support:

- to improve
  - Leadership at all levels
  - Behaviour
  - Attendance
- to sustain the identified good provision in EYFS where the current Advanced Skills Teacher leading the Foundation Stage will be leaving the school in April 2011 to take up another post
- to support the two newly appointed temporary teachers, one of whom is a Newly Qualified Teacher beginning induction, who will be covering for two teachers due to start maternity leave in March 2011

The Local Authority's Governor Services team will provide advice to support and coach the governors and enhance the school's capacity to improve.

The plan is detailed within the attached Annex.

#### **b) Arrangements for informing and consulting with parents and carers**

The Local Authority, together with the governing body and the senior staff of the school, is meeting with the parents on March 29<sup>th</sup> 2011. The governing body will produce a newsletter to parents each term with specific information to keep them abreast of the progress made on the key issues during the period of 'Special Measures'.

#### **c) Specific steps required to build leadership and management capacity of the school**

Prior to the recent inspection the Headteacher resigned, planning to leave her post in August 2011. Following the inspection the Headteacher has requested an immediate release from her contract and it is likely that this will take effect from April 2011. The Local Authority is supporting the school in recruiting an Interim Headteacher for the summer term and in the appointment process for the substantive post.

Following the Headteacher's request for early release the Chair of Governors decided to step down from his position as Chair. The governing body met to elect a new chair and vice-chair and are currently reviewing the structure of the governing body to ensure it will support improvement.

#### **d) Quality Assurance measures**

The progress and impact of the plan will be monitored and evaluated by a Strategic Implementation Group. This group will meet monthly and the membership is.

Chair:	Director of Learning
Members:	Head of Standards and Effectiveness (3-11)
	Chair of Governors
	Headteacher
	Local Authority Inspector
	English and Maths advisors
	Governor Services Manager
	Locality Manager
	Attendance Manager

In turn reports from this group will be reported to the Local Authority's Schools Causing Concern Forum which meets termly. This group consists of senior officers within the Children and Young People's Services and is chaired by the Director of Learning. The evaluation of progress in schools with designations is a standing item at these meetings.

In addition, there will be half-termly RAP review meetings of professionals. The outcomes of these reviews will also feed into the Implementation group meetings.

## **Conclusion**

The Local Authority considers that with this considerable support and coaching through the next two years, together with the actions detailed in the attached plan, Millfield Primary School will have the capacity to address the issues identified in the inspection report and ensure its removal from the designation of Special Measures by March 2013.