

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



22 October 2025

Linda Francis
Headteacher
Harborne Primary School
Station Road
Harborne
Birmingham
West Midlands
B17 9LU

Dear Mrs Francis

Special measures monitoring inspection of Harborne Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 2 October 2025, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in May 2025.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, Heather Simpson, His Majesty's Inspector (HMI), and I discussed with you, other senior leaders and the local authority the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also reviewed safeguarding documentation, spoke to staff and pupils, observed pupils' behaviour, visited lessons, scrutinised a range of action-planning documentation and considered responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to no longer be judged as requiring special measures.

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspection we carry out.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

Since the previous inspection in May 2025, the school's leadership and staffing have been more stable than in the past. A new headteacher and attendance leader have recently been appointed. Changes to the school's leadership structure have resulted in greater clarity of staff roles and responsibilities.

During this visit, the focus was on the school's actions to improve safeguarding practices, attendance and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The school's work to improve the curriculum is in development. Appropriate plans are in place to improve the curriculum. Staff have received training focused on a new writing curriculum. The writing curriculum has been implemented recently. While this is in the early stages of implementation, there are signs of a positive impact on the quality of writing in Year 5 and Year 6. However, there is more work to do to secure this improvement. The school is considering how to develop the early years curriculum to improve the teaching of physical development and early writing.

The school has clear plans in place to improve provision for pupils with SEND and is taking appropriate action. The 'Nest' provision for some pupils with SEND has been relocated and resources have improved. Staff's expertise is developing. This means that pupils with SEND are well cared for in a nurturing environment. There is more work to do to improve the curriculum and staff's expertise to support pupils with SEND.

The school has introduced a new attendance policy, which has been communicated to parents and carers. An attendance leader and officer role has been created to enact daily attendance procedures. This work is closely checked by the senior leadership team. The school has recently introduced a coherent procedure for checking on pupil absences. Any absence from school is followed up, and pupils' well-being is checked systematically. There is still more work to do to increase attendance rates for some pupils. The school is aware of this and has appropriate systems in place to begin to address this.

The school has revised behaviour expectations and made these clear to everyone. Most staff implement the behaviour policy. Pupils understand how they should behave. Rewards and celebrations of positive behaviours have been introduced. Targeted support is in place for some pupils who need this. As a result, most pupils listen well in lessons. At lunchtimes, 'Rainbow Club' is available for some pupils who need a quiet space to play. There is some more work to do to make lunchtimes a purposeful time for pupils.

Staff's professional development is a key focus for improvement. This work has begun, although there is more to do. Overall, staff hold positive views about the changes taking place.

The school is supported by the local authority, and a statement of action detailing areas for improvement is in place. The local authority has continued to support the school in making regular checks on aspects of the school's work. At present, there are no governors in post. The local authority is in the very early stages of establishing an interim executive board to fulfil the governing body's roles and responsibilities.

The school commissioned an external safeguarding review. It has completed recommended actions with urgency. The leadership team for safeguarding has increased capacity. There are more staff with safeguarding expertise, making sure that safeguarding practices are followed swiftly and correctly. Staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training. As a result, they know what to look for and how to report concerns. Advice from external agencies is sought and acted on in a timely manner. Pupils feel safe. They know who they can speak to if they have a worry and are confident that it will be dealt with properly. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school welcomes and values the support provided by the local authority and an external provider. The local authority commissioned a finance audit, which has recently been carried out by the Department for Education. This has helped the school to improve the management of its finances.

I am copying this letter to the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Emma Titchener
His Majesty's Inspector