

department for
children, schools and families

School Standards Group

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Chineham Park Primary School: statutory notice under schedule 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

I am writing to notify you that there is now significant ministerial concern about Chineham Park Primary School, which has been in special measures for 11 months.

As you know, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 included consolidated legislation on schools causing concern, and provided local authorities, and the Secretary of State with additional legal powers. The relevant legislation commenced in April 2007, and comprehensive statutory guidance was published in May 2007 and revised in September 2008.

Within the legislation (Schedule 7, paragraph 1 (3)), there is a provision which empowers the Secretary of State, after an Ofsted monitoring visit, to decide that "the case has become urgent"; to require a local authority to reconsider its actions; and to make a formal written response. I attach a copy of this legislation, and the relevant Schools Causing Concern guidance (paragraphs 101-106 in particular) <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/sie/si/SCC/>

Chineham Park Primary School has been in special measures since January 2009 and was judged to be making inadequate progress on its last monitoring visit on 2 and 3 December. Of particular concern are the comments regarding the effectiveness of provision and some aspects of leadership and management.

I therefore confirm that with respect to Chineham Park Primary, the Secretary of State now regards the case as urgent, and that this letter serves as notice that the authority must make a written response within 10 working days (i.e. by 26/01/10) on the action it now proposes to take.



The legislation also includes reserve powers for the Secretary of State to direct a local authority to close a school in special measures. Ministers have indicated they will consider using these powers should progress not be satisfactory, and the response to “schedule 7” notices is judged insufficient. If the authority decides not to make its own proposals to close the school, then your response will need to include clear and compelling evidence that the Secretary of State should not use his own power to close.

I am copying this letter to Helen Bennett, Director of Children and Learning, GOSE and Jim McElligott, Senior Regional Director for the National Strategy. I have asked Jim McElligott to contact you to discuss the next steps in relation to Chineham Park Primary school.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gemma Astin', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Gemma Astin
Policy Advisor
Raising Standards Division