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15 November 2012

Miss Amanda Fell  
Headteacher  
Carrington Junior School  
4 Chapel Road  
High Wycombe  
HP10 9AA

Dear Miss Fell

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 on 15 November 2012**

Following my visit to your school on 15 November 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in September 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During this visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and two additional governors, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils. The school action plan and the local authority's support plan were evaluated. Two joint lesson observations took place with the headteacher.

**Context**

Since the recent section 5 inspection, all pupils have started to follow a commercial literacy programme involving the use of information and communication technology to develop their reading and writing skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are now grouped together for mathematics and taught by ability. Two new teachers have been appointed, of whom one is newly qualified, and a learning mentor has started working at the school. Two new parent governors have recently joined the governing body.

## **Main findings**

The headteacher has responded swiftly to the findings of the previous inspection by producing an action plan which clearly identifies and addresses the key areas for improvement. The plan is well thought out and includes strategies which aim to overcome barriers to improving achievement, teaching and leadership and management. Although all of the areas for improvement are fully covered, and it is clear who is to monitor progress, methods for measuring the impact of actions taken would benefit from some fine-tuning. The plan does not identify specific times during the year when progress can be evaluated to ensure that it is still on track to bring about improvement. The plan makes no reference to evaluating the usefulness of the proposed initiatives through the gathering of staff views.

The action plan clearly aims to develop teachers' understanding of how to make teaching good or better, involving planning lessons which best meet the needs of different groups of pupils. As some teachers have worked in the school for a number of years, the headteacher has taken the wise decision that every teacher is to visit a good or outstanding school in order to observe good practice elsewhere. Weekly scheduled discussions now take place about the importance of effective teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement. Middle leaders are to be coached by experts on how to judge the quality of teaching, and how to have difficult discussions with colleagues whose practice is in need of improvement.

Members of the governing body are fully aware of their role in helping to secure a 'good' judgement at the next full inspection. Close scrutiny of minutes of meetings shows that they are asking the right sort of questions to challenge the school's leaders. They have all been trained on how to interpret school performance data, and are about to revisit this topic in the near future. This is particularly important for members who have recently joined the governing body.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- make sure that progress against all actions in the improvement plan is clearly measurable, and at regular times during the school year
- ensure that new members of the governing body are fully trained and up to speed with how to become a 'good' school
- gather the views of colleagues about the quality of school improvement activities they are being offered in order to shape future planning.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

## **External support**

The local authority's support plan identifies several opportunities for support from consultants, including accompanying teachers to observe teaching in good and outstanding schools, and working with the special educational needs co-ordinator to develop her role. A two-day review of teaching and learning is scheduled for February 2013. However, the local authority's response to the outcome of the last inspection has been slow, and none of the proposed activities have yet taken place.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Buckinghamshire.

Yours sincerely

John Daniell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**