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4 December 2012

Dr J Loftus  
Headteacher  
Coston Primary School  
Oldfield Lane South  
Greenford  
Middlesex  
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Dear Dr Loftus

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Coston Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 4 December 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 October 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and the senior leadership team, four members of the governing body including the Chair and the Vice Chair, and a representative from the local authority. A meeting also took place with pupils. The headteacher took the HMI on a tour of the school which included visits to lessons. The school action plan was evaluated.

### **Context**

Since the section 5 inspection, the school has become part of the Ealing Challenge programme which provides additional support and intervention. A new post of literacy subject leader has been created as well as two new classroom assistant posts to provide support for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

## **Main findings**

The school action plan, which has been amended following consultation with the local authority, sufficiently addresses the areas identified as requiring improvement in the last section 5 inspection. The detailed and ambitious plan clearly identifies actions to be taken and includes fixed times throughout the academic year when progress will be measured. Many of the actions listed have already started, although it is too early to assess their impact. The plan includes some whole-school staff development relating to improving the quality of teaching as well as assessment and phonics. The governing body does not currently feature in the plan in any monitoring capacity and did not have the opportunity to contribute during the planning stage.

Literacy has a higher profile in the school and teachers are starting to structure their lessons so that more opportunities are available for pupils to work on their own. Observations of teaching are starting to have a clearer focus, but scrutiny of pupils' books have endorsed the view that next-step marking is an on-going area for improvement. Pupil premium funding has been used wisely to employ additional staff to work with smaller groups of targeted pupils. The introduction of a hands-on numeracy resource has been well received by pupils.

Senior leaders have taken action to develop the role of staff who have subject or area responsibilities. These colleagues have started to visit lessons to focus on specific aspects of learning and to assess pupils' progress by looking through their books. Members of the senior leadership team welcome the support they are getting from the local authority in developing literacy and numeracy, working with school performance data and scrutinising action plans.

The governing body is aware of the role it has in helping the school to become good. A meeting called by the governing body to discuss the outcome of the last section 5 inspection and ways forward with senior leaders and parents and carers was, however, poorly attended by parents and carers. Members of the governing body have investigated ways to monitor pupils' achievement more rigorously. For example, they have plans for individual governors to be more closely linked to a particular year group. They understand their role in holding senior leaders to account and monitoring progress in relation to the action plan. However, their current schedule for meetings does not allow them to do this until March 2013 which is too late.

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:

- involve both governors and parents in every stage of the journey to becoming a good school e.g. let parents know about progress being made through regular newsletters, and encourage governors to deepen their understanding

of effective school improvement strategies by attending any training sessions provided by the local authority

- schedule an earlier governors' meeting at the start of the Spring term to assess whether the school is on track to achieving the aims in the action plan
- sharpen the focus on next-steps marking so that the existing good practice is shared across the whole school.

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

### **External Support**

The local authority has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It has responded swiftly to the outcome of the last section 5 inspection by working productively with the school's leaders. As the school is now part of the Ealing Challenge programme, it will be subject to an in-school review in the Spring Term.

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

Yours sincerely

John Daniell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**