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12 December 2012

Michele Tracey  
Darwen St Peter's CE Primary School  
Turncroft Road  
Darwen  
Lancashire  
BB3 2BW

Dear Mrs Tracey

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Darwen St Peter's CE Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 12 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, the assessment co-ordinator and two members of the senior leadership team; the Chair of the Governing Body and five other members of the governing body; the school improvement officer and the school improvement partner. Her Majesty's Inspector toured the school, evaluated the school improvement plan and scrutinised records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching and minutes of the Governing Body meetings were scrutinised.

### **Context**

There have been no significant changes to the staff team or the school's organisation since the inspection. A new member has joined the governing body.

## **Main findings**

Senior leaders and governors agree that the outcomes and priorities from the recent inspection are the correct ones to move the school to good. The focus on strengthening the consistency of the quality of teaching has steered the actions they have taken since the inspection. They have responded with suitable urgency and have taken immediate action to enable teachers to:

- observe outstanding practice in other schools and implement appropriate practice in their own classrooms
- improve the range of books available for boys
- teach grammar, punctuation and spelling in Key Stage 2 in weekly sessions and plan for purposeful writing across all subjects
- implement a reviewed approach to the teaching of phonics across Key Stage 1.

The headteacher's observations of the quality of teaching show an improving picture. Plans to introduce a more efficient system to plot pupils' progress are advancing. Intervention programmes are now more suited to the individual needs of the pupils and a system for checking the effectiveness of these programmes on pupils' achievement is in place.

Senior leaders, staff and governors have a clear vision for the improvement of the school and want to provide a good education for the pupils in their care. Governors support and robustly challenge the school and are investing significant funds to improve the quality of teaching. The revised school development plan addresses the main areas that need improvement. However, it does not always state clearly what effect improvements are expected to have on pupils' attainment and progress; neither does it have clear milestones so that the improvements can be reviewed regularly and systematically.

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:

- review the school improvement plan to strengthen the links between planned action and the effect on pupils' learning
- include milestones so that leaders and governors can monitor and evaluate progress more regularly and systematically.

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

## **External support**

The local authority has provided support which has focused on the improvement in the quality of teaching. This has been enhanced by the school's partnership with an outstanding school and the headteacher's links with a local network of schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Eileen Mulgrew  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**