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28 November 2012

Ed Constantine  
Cherry Tree Primary School and Speech and Language Unit  
Holt Drive  
Mersea Road  
Colchester  
CO2 0BG

Dear Mr Constantine

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Cherry Tree Primary School and Speech and Language Unit**

Following my visit to your school on 27 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 the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

### **Context**

Since the inspection the school has appointed two assistant headteachers, one to work with Key Stage One teachers and the other to work with Key Stage Two teachers. The teacher who is responsible for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is beginning to work with these pupils, their parents and teachers. There has been training for all staff on how to use practical mathematics equipment. Teachers have visited two local schools to look at good teaching and learning. The school has started a breakfast club.

**Main findings**

The headteacher has taken rapid action to improve teaching and pupils' achievement in reading. As a result standards in reading have improved since the inspection especially in Years 1 and 2 with some pupils doing a lot better than expected. This is because every class teaches pupils about the sounds that letters make and every pupil reads to an adult, every day. Most parents are also reading every day with their children at home. The school improvement plan mentions all the areas for improvement from the inspection report but there are too many other targets and these are not always clearly linked to improving teaching and pupils' learning. The headteacher has held meetings with teachers about the progress pupils make in their class. Governors have spent a day in the school to find out about teaching and learning. This has helped them to understand how teachers plan lessons so that pupils learn well. As a result they have a better understanding of the questions they need to ask.

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 recommends that action already being taken by the school is strengthened. HMI will visit the school again in the spring term to look at how teachers use different types of questions to help pupils learn better.

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

**External support**

The school is drawing well upon the external support provided to them by the local authority. The headteacher has made links with two good schools who are giving good support for improving the quality of teaching. Some governors have had training from the local authority. There has been no independent review of governance.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Winyard  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**