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19 January 2013

Miss Daisy Bailey  
Headteacher  
Laira Green Primary School  
Bramley Road  
Plymouth  
Devon  
PL3 6BP

Dear Miss Bailey

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

Following my visit to your school on 18 January 2013, 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 November 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

#### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior and subject leaders, four members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. A session on the teaching of letters and sounds was observed with the subject leader. The inspector met with groups of pupils. The school improvement plans were evaluated.

#### **Context**

There have been no significant changes to staff or governors since the inspection.

#### **Main findings**

The school has taken appropriate steps to build upon improvements to the quality of teaching and to raise achievement, especially in Years 1 and 2. Pupils have suitable

targets for both the short and long term and staff are being held accountable for their actions in supporting pupils to reach these.

Reading levels are rising because of improvements to the way in which pupils are taught the basics, including the way in which words are formed. The school has identified that the standard of pupils' writing is not as high as it should be and so has taken steps to build upon improvements to the teaching of reading to improve pupils' writing.

The mathematics subject leader has undertaken a review of the way in which the subject is taught. She has identified that too much teaching was based on the text book and was not developing pupils' mathematical understanding. There is a clear action plan to bring about the necessary improvements to the quality of teaching.

There is a very clear timeline of when improvements will be introduced, when they will be checked to see their impact and when governors will receive a report on the progress to date. The action plan includes elements from the school's work with the Teaching School initiative. The school expects the impact of actions to improve reading, writing and mathematics to be reflected in improved standards by the summer term. However targets within plans are not always focused upon outcomes which are measurable and hence may not be evaluated.

Governors have benefited from support from the governor support team in the local authority. They have evaluated the effectiveness of the governing body, identified areas for improvements and given support to ensure governors are better able to challenge the school and to check on the progress made by pupils. Governors get good information from the senior leaders on how well different groups are progressing across all years. However this information does not show how effective pupil premium money is at closing the gap in attainment between pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and those who not.

Senior leaders and governors are taking 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:

- strengthen the success criteria within the school's action plans so they give clear outcomes which can be evaluated
- include specific information on how the gap between the attainment of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium and those who are not, is closing.

The HMI will make a further visit to support school subject leaders in evaluating the impact of the school's work to improve reading, writing and mathematics, including joint lesson observations. HMI will also undertake a further visit to support leaders and governors in developing action plans which better meet the needs of the school.

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

### **External support**

The school has worked well with the local authority governor development team to improve the effectiveness of governors. The Plymouth Teaching School Alliance support has been successful in improving the quality of teaching. The local authority has identified another local school which was recently judged to require improvement and has plans to work together with these schools along with a Local Leader of Education to tackle similar areas which require improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Smith

**Her Majesty's Inspector**