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1 February 2013

Mrs Julia Marshall  
Executive Headteacher  
Willoughton Primary School  
Northfield Lane  
Willoughton  
Gainsborough  
DN21 5RT

Dear Mrs Marshall

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

Following my visit to your school on 1 February 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 executive headteacher and representatives of the governing body. A telephone conversation was held with an educational adviser working on behalf of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

#### **Context**

Since the last inspection the previous executive headteacher has left the school. The federation agreement with Tealby Primary School is in the process of being dissolved. A new executive headteacher has been appointed on a temporary contract until July 2013, at which point the arrangement will be reviewed. The new executive headteacher divides her time equally between Willoughton Primary School and an infant school. A new educational adviser, working on behalf of the local authority, has recently begun to work with the school.

## Main findings

The new executive headteacher has settled into her role quickly and has worked effectively with staff and the governing body to prepare an action plan to tackle the school's weaknesses. The plan is appropriate and covers all of the issues identified at the time of the last inspection. However, the plan does not clearly identify how the school's leaders will check that children are making improved progress each term in reading, writing and mathematics.

The governing body has carried out an evaluation of its strengths, skills and areas for development. Training is planned to address the identified areas for development, including training to further develop governors' skills in interpreting data about pupils' performance. Representatives of the governing body are visiting the school more frequently and are gaining an improved understanding of the school's work. However, the school's improvement plan does not identify which governors will be checking the school's main priorities, or how and when they will do this.

A number of improvements have been made to the school in a short period of time. For example, the range of topics that pupils learn about has been reviewed and broadened, and systems to track the progress that pupils make are being sharpened and refined. Teachers have received training to help them improve the ways in which they plan activities to meet the needs of individual pupils, and leaders are rigorously checking that the training is helping to improve the quality of teaching. Members of staff have also visited a school which is recognised for its excellent practice, to identify ways in which classrooms can be reorganised and improved to promote better learning.

The executive headteacher and the governing body are determined to improve the school in order to become good or outstanding, and have expressed strong interest in attending an HMI seminar to further support school improvement.

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:

- ensure that senior leaders and a representative of the governing body attend a school improvement seminar led by HMI
- include clear and easily measurable milestones in the school's improvement plan to enable leaders, including the governing body, to gain a more accurate understanding of how well pupils' progress is improving in reading, writing and mathematics
- further strengthen the improvement plan by ensuring that it clearly states the activities to be monitored by the governing body, which governors will be involved, and when the work will take place

- submit the school's revised improvement plan to HMI by the end of February 2013.

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

### **External support**

Since the last inspection the local authority has supported the school to prepare an improvement plan to address the issues outlined at the last inspection. Further support has been provided to help teachers to improve the quality of teaching through improved planning, in order to meet the needs of individual pupils more effectively. The support has been welcomed by school staff and the governing body.

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

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Spencer  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**