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6 February 2013

Mrs H Ormerod  
Othery Village School  
Othery  
Bridgwater  
TA7 0PX

Dear Mrs Ormerod

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Othery Village School**

Following my visit to your school on 05 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 you, another senior leader, three governors and a local leader of education (a headteacher from a successful neighbouring school), representing the local authority. The school's plans for improvement were evaluated and samples of teachers' planning and pupils' work considered. A meeting was also held with Year 6 pupils.

### **Context**

There have been no significant changes since the recent inspection which judged the school to require improvement.

### **Main findings**

The headteacher and the governing body acted quickly to plan for improvement following the inspection report. Although the raising attainment plan has been revised to address the main areas in need of improvement, including developing the

role of the governing body, it has some weaknesses. It does not identify clearly the progress expected over the year in English and mathematics to help in monitoring of the impact of actions each term. The plan does not set out how the impact of improvements in leadership and management on teaching and pupils' learning might be assessed more precisely.

The school has acted to improve mathematics and lesson planning is now linked more flexibly and closely to pupils' identified skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils are helped to reflect on their learning and to identify for themselves what they need to work on next. Lesson observations are now sharply focused on aspects of teaching identified in the inspection report as in need of improvement. Any areas for development are to be followed up in future observations. Improvements in writing will be addressed soon when planned staff training has been carried out.

Job descriptions of senior staff have been revised and there is now a clear role in taking responsibility for improving teaching and learning in allocated subjects. A good start has already been made in mathematics. The governing body is asking questions of school leaders about pupils' progress and governors are increasingly active in visiting the school to gain first hand evidence. Governors are linked with classes and with English and mathematics. Visits are now focused on improvement priorities and documented in reports. It is not clear enough in the raising attainment plan how governors will check whether planned improvements are taking place.

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:

- be more specific about expected progress in the raising attainment plan to assist in checking progress
- involve governors more in checking how well improvements in the teaching of writing and mathematics result in better learning and progress
- specify how governors will monitor progress in improving leadership and management
- press ahead with improving skills in teaching writing as soon as possible.

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

### **External support**

The school draws effectively on support from a local leader of education and the schools in her federation, as arranged by the local authority. This has included a valuable opportunity for a teacher from Othery Village School to visit a similar class in a neighbouring school. In addition, a mathematics subject leader from another school supported a recent scrutiny of pupils' work in this subject here.

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

Yours sincerely

Grahame Sherfield  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**