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12 February 2013

Pearl Jones  
Headteacher  
Cottesbrooke Junior School  
Cedars Avenue  
Birmingham  
B27 6JL

Dear Ms Jones

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

Following my visit to your school on 12 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 headteacher, other senior leaders, representatives from the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, and a group of pupils. The school's action plans were evaluated. A range of documentation was reviewed, including minutes from governing body minutes, newsletters to parents and carers, and information about pupils' achievement.

#### **Context**

There have been no significant changes since the recent section 5 inspection.

#### **Main findings**

The school's revised action plans include appropriate actions to address the areas for improvement. They also include success criteria, which provide details of the expected improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. The

action plans do not state who will check the effectiveness of the school's actions or how often these checks will take place.

Standards in writing are rising. Interesting topics are encouraging pupils to write regularly and practise their writing skills. Communication with parents and carers is improving. A 'Parents Champion Group' will be meeting this week to discuss the school's priorities for improvement. School leaders and teachers are meeting to discuss the progress of pupils and identify the actions that need to be taken to help pupils make faster progress. However, these meetings are not frequent enough to identify quickly which groups are underachieving.

Governors have a better awareness of their roles and responsibilities because of recent training from the local authority. They are beginning to ask questions and challenge school leaders about the work of the school. The governors receive detailed information about the achievement of pupils in Year 6. Information about the achievement of pupils in other year groups is not detailed enough for governors to hold the school to account.

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:

- ensure the action plans clearly state who will check the effectiveness of the school's actions and how often these checks will take place
- more frequently discuss with class teachers, the progress of pupils and the actions that will be taken to raise achievement
- make sure that governors regularly receive precise information about the achievement of pupils in all year groups so that they can rigorously evaluate the impact of the school's actions.

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

### **External support**

The local authority in partnership with a national leader in education and a local leader in education is providing the school with an effective level of support. Their support has helped the school prioritise actions, tailor training for teachers and teaching assistants, and strengthen governance. The local authority will be undertaking a review of the school early next term.

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

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**