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22 February 2013

Mrs H Beggs
Acting Headteacher
Maryport CofE Junior School
Camp Road
Maryport
Cumbria
CA15 6JN

Dear Mrs Beggs

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Maryport CofE Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 21 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 acting headteacher, subject leaders, members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) met all staff, toured the school and spoke with a group of pupils. The school improvement plan, post-Ofsted action plan and supporting documents were evaluated.

Context

The school has temporary supply cover in some classes following further long-term sickness absence. Interviews to appoint a substantive headteacher have been arranged.

Main findings

The acting headteacher has developed a specific post-inspection plan to supplement the school improvement plan. The plan addresses fully all the areas identified as requiring improvement at the inspection in November 2012. It clearly shows what action will be taken to improve teaching and quicken the pace of pupils' learning. However, it does not

currently show how the success of actions will be measured or the timing for their completion and review. The role of Governors in checking the progress of the plan and its success in raising pupils' achievement is unclear. Governors are keen to develop their role in monitoring and evaluation and have taken the initiative to develop their expertise through training. They know the school well through regular visits and well developed links with subject leaders.

Since the inspection, school leaders and teachers have worked together effectively to review assessment and marking policies and ensure a consistent approach. They have shown drive and enthusiasm to improve teaching and ensure all pupils make at least good progress. Professional development has been appropriately focused on introducing more dynamic teaching strategies and giving pupils time to work independently. Teachers have welcomed the training and opportunities work alongside each other and colleagues from partner schools. Pupils say they are happy in their school and enjoy lessons. They particularly like lessons where they carry out independent research and work things out for themselves. The acting headteacher has introduced extremely useful class profiles to identify groups of pupils who need additional support and check they are making good progress.

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:

- develop action planning to include measurable success criteria and timescales and clarify how progress will be checked and success will be evaluated
- develop the role of governors in monitoring and evaluation.

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

External support

The local authority has provided considerable support to the school during the last two years, during a time of uncertainty in leadership. Recent interim headteacher arrangements have ensured that the school has continued to improve. Local authority officers have led on professional development for staff and governors. They have brokered a link with a local school which has proved constructive and successful.

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

Yours sincerely

Jean Olsson-Law
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body
- Local authority
- Diocese - for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The lead inspector.