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29 April 2013

Angela Smith  
Priory Park Infant School  
Almond Road  
St Neots  
PE19 1DZ

Dear Mrs Smith

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Priory Park Infant School, St Neots.**

Following my visit to your school on 26 April 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 February 2013.

**Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with yourself and three representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. I spoke to the local authority primary adviser and evaluated the school strategic and operational improvement plans. We jointly went into lessons and spoke to pupils about their work. I scrutinised some lessons plans and pupils' exercise books.

**Context**

There have been no significant changes to the school's context. Three new teachers are due to join the school in September 2013.

**Main findings**

The school is making steady progress towards becoming a good school. The improvement plan is clearly focused on accelerating pupils' progress and improving the quality of teaching. With the support of governors, you have set tight timescales

for improvement and are aiming for the school's effectiveness to be good by the end of the next academic year. Targets are set to increase the proportion of good teaching, although these are not sufficiently linked to the proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected progress. With the support of the local authority, you are tracking the school's progress closely and hold staff to account ensuring that there is no slippage in implementing the plan. Your own evaluation has identified inconsistencies in the way teachers match activities to pupils' ability and accuracy of assessment requires consolidation. Common approaches in marking pupils' work are showing that pupils are told what they need to do to improve, resulting in their better progress.

The governing body is involved in implementing and updating the improvement plan. Governors are accessing training on understanding and using performance data to challenge your senior leadership team. Governors visit the school regularly and the notes following their visits demonstrate that they are independently checking the accuracy of the information you provide on teaching and learning.

With the support of your leadership team and governors, you 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, I recommend that further action is taken to:

- check teacher assessment across and within years to verify its accuracy and to ensure that work in years 1 and 2 builds on progress made in early years
- ensure that agreed strategies to improve teaching are applied more consistently across all classes to increase the proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected progress.

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

### **External support**

The local authority primary adviser checks progress on the improvement plan and visits the school regularly to provide advice and challenge. The local authority is funding the Priory-Paxton Partnership (PPP) to enable staff to share good practice. You have set up visits to good and outstanding schools to raise expectation of what it is possible to achieve.

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

Yours sincerely

Marianick Ellender-Gelé  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**