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23 April 2013

Mr Pierre Coiffait  
Headteacher  
Moorside Primary School  
Market Street  
Droylsden  
Manchester  
M43 7DA

Dear Mr Coiffait

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

Following my visit to your school on 22 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. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and a group of pupils. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority. The school's development plan, most recent monitoring report and professional development records were also evaluated.

### **Context**

Following the recent inspection three teachers have left the school and two classes now have temporary teachers. Middle leadership has also been restructured with a lead teacher now being responsible for the two classes in each year group.

## **Main findings**

The current development plan is very detailed and complex. There is a focus on strategies such as improving the lesson observation skills of middle leaders rather than ensuring that they develop the capability to inform and improve their areas of responsibility. There is clear reference to monitoring procedures but limited evidence to link this with specific strategies which will improve and develop more creative approaches to teaching and the planning of teaching. There is no reference to improving teachers' subject knowledge which provides the basis for good and outstanding teaching. Monitoring on its own will not lead to improvements in the classroom. There is limited specific reference to Key Stage 1, where the weakest practice was identified during the inspection. Equally, strategies to enhance learning through the use of national and international links are vague. These focus on providing experiences but do not identify how these can be enhanced to improve classroom practice or the curriculum in order to support learning. The plan is too cluttered and there is a need to focus on a more limited number of outcomes which are achievable.

The school is going to be supported by a local teaching school in order to share good practice. A preparatory visit was carried out with the help of a consultant to identify the level and nature of the support which might be required. This identified specific areas which need to be developed including greater challenge and ensuring more teaching is consistently good. A more specific review of teaching is to be carried out next month to identify and personalise improvement points for individual teachers. Although this is valuable, it is organisational and is delaying more immediate change required in the classroom. There is a clear desire to improve but currently the pace of change is leisurely. In the past, teachers have attended numerous and varied training events. This has raised awareness but has not changed practice. Individuals have not been held accountable for the lack of implementation in the classroom and their own practice. Senior managers facilitate this process but have not monitored developments to ensure that improvements are taking place in the classroom and that investment in any training provides value for money. Pupils have noted minor improvements such as less teacher talk in lessons but, at present, overall impact has been more limited. Although good practice exists, there is little evidence to show that it is being shared in a systematic way to speed up improvements in teaching, despite the re-organisation of responsibilities. Currently, middle leaders are not having sufficient impact on informing and improving practice in the classroom. Governors are supportive but do not hold the teachers sufficiently to account, especially when money is being spent on training which is not having sufficient impact on raising the standards of teaching. There is a need for greater urgency and increased accountability in order to ensure that teachers are making a difference in the classroom.

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:

- review the current improvement plan to ensure that actions are more firmly focused on improvements in the classroom and that monitoring is used to support this process
- ensure that a smaller number of initiatives are adopted which are achievable and that resources are focused and not dissipated

- make sure that school leaders, teachers and staff work with the support provided by the partner school to implement the improvements identified in the school development plan, especially in Key Stage 1
- involve all subject leaders in providing ideas, suggestions and resources to improve teaching in their areas of responsibility
- ensure that money is well spent, particularly for training, and that this is reflected in improved teaching in classrooms.

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

### **External support**

The local authority has provided limited support prior to the inspection but now has a more visible profile. However, support has not yet been translated into visible action. A post-Ofsted review has taken place in partnership with the Leadership Learning Alliance, includes the teaching school that Moorside has been partnered with. There are plans to monitor impact and to provide support and validate data. There are also plans to support developments in reading and to assist the literacy subject leader. However, other support is more nebulous or has not yet been confirmed. It is essential that impact in the classroom becomes more evident and that the pace of change becomes quicker.

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

Yours sincerely

Leszek Iwaskow

**Her Majesty's Inspector**