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26 April 2013

Helen Procter  
Meadows Primary School  
Newcastle Road  
Madeley Heath  
Crewe  
CW3 9JX

Dear Mrs Procter

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Meadows Primary School, Staffordshire.**

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 on 28 – 29 November 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, representatives from the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated, a number of short visits to lessons were made and school documentation was examined.

**Context**

Since the last inspection, one governor has resigned from the governing body.

**Main findings**

Work has begun to address the issues identified at the inspection in November 2012. Priorities have been agreed and action plans have been implemented to address areas of weakness. The plan includes clear priorities, actions and success criteria. While there are monitoring and evaluation procedures identified in the plan, they lack timescales and do not state who will monitor the actions. Currently the plan

includes actions for this academic year, but it does not include details of how school improvement will continue beyond July 2013.

Pupils' progress is now regularly monitored and teachers are becoming more accountable for the standards pupils reach. The headteacher is monitoring the quality of teaching through formal lesson observations, learning walks and scrutiny of planning and pupils' books. A new teaching and learning policy has been agreed with staff and includes a range of strategies for teaching which are non-negotiable.

Improving writing is a priority for the school and the headteacher acknowledges much work is still required to improve standards in this area. Training for teachers has been planned and pupils are now given more opportunities to write for extended periods of time. However, there is little evidence of this impacting on levels of attainment.

To improve teaching further teachers have observed good teaching in local schools. Teachers are not always aware of pupils' next steps in their learning because too little emphasis is given to the marking of pupils' work. This is the case across all subjects.

To improve subject leadership links have been made with a local school so that teachers can learn from good practice in the use of assessment.

The governing body shows a commitment to help improve the school. They have received training and now have a greater understanding of data. They have created sub-committees, with a focus on improving areas of weakness. They are aware of school priorities and are beginning to understand how they can better challenge school leaders. Governors are now observing learning in lessons, looking at pupils' work and linking with subject leaders. Governors recognise the need to hold all staff to account for the quality of learning and teaching and the impact this has on pupils' 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 the school improvement plan to include planned actions beyond July 2013
- work alongside a Local Leader for Education
- attend Ofsted school improvement seminars with a focus on English
- rigorously challenge teaching that is not good through the implementation of support programmes
- ensure all staff are fully held to account for the quality of their teaching.

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

### **External support**

Local authority officers regularly review the school's performance. They facilitated a partnership between The Meadows and a consultant headteacher when the school received the 'requires improvement' judgement. Unfortunately, this support has now stopped. Both the local authority and headteacher acknowledge more support for leadership would be beneficial. The local authority has provided training for the governing body and plans are in place to support staff in developing pupils' literacy skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**