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26 April 2013

Mrs Jane Verity  
Headteacher  
Brookfield Community Primary School  
Watling Street Road  
Preston  
Lancashire  
PR2 6TU

Dear Mrs Verity

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Brookfield Community Primary School, Lancashire**

Following my visit to your school on 25 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 my visit, meetings were held with yourself, senior leaders and managers, three members of the governing body and a local authority officer. The school improvement plan was evaluated. Minutes from governing body meetings and the school's monitoring records were considered. We also visited each classroom to meet pupils and staff.

**Context**

Since the February inspection, the Reception teacher has returned to school following a period of extended leave.

**Main findings**

Although disappointed with the inspection judgement, you are determined to tackle major shortcomings so the school can move towards being a good school. It is clear you know what actions need to be taken and you are aware of some potential difficult decisions that may be ahead of you. A key strength is your acceptance that

the school will not flourish if you continue to do the same things that you have always done, as these strategies have not had total success in moving the school forward. You, the staff and the governing body have been busy since the inspection and it is clear you are all taking the findings from the inspection very seriously. Nonetheless, despite the range of activity that has taken place since February, the pace of change is not quick enough. Your own records show that the majority of teaching continues to require improvement and the achievement of pupils, particularly those in Key Stage 2, is too variable. There is much to do to help pupils make swifter progress and reach the standards expected for their age.

The key reason the school has not taken enough effective action since the inspection lies with the uneven distribution of responsibility for driving improvement across the school. You are taking on far too much. The role of senior leaders in bringing about change and then checking the difference their actions are making to teaching and pupil outcomes is underdeveloped. Furthermore, the governing body are in the earliest stages of checking on the work of the school and holding all senior leaders to account. Governors recognise they are overly reliant on the information provided by you to gain an overview of how well the school is performing.

The weaknesses identified in the inspection report have a high priority in the school's planned actions for improvement. Nonetheless, not enough thought has been given to the specific steps you will take to improve teaching so all pupils benefit from good or better teaching. The goals for long term success are unclear and the plan does not precisely identify the role of all leaders. This means they are not crystal clear about what they are expected to do and how they will be held accountable for their work.

The checks on teaching have improved since the inspection which means you are providing teachers with clear targets to help them improve their practice. Pupils' books are checked frequently to make sure new guidelines on marking, handwriting and presentation are being followed.

The governing body are committed to improving the school and are keen to raise their game to help the school make swifter progress. They have established a special committee who will keep an eye on the difference planned actions make to pupils' achievement. They have already updated their understanding of pupil premium funding and know how this money has been spent. They are also beginning to get to grips with national data so they know how well their school fares against others. However, they are in the earliest stages of identifying their own strengths and weaknesses and planning what they need to do to improve their own effectiveness.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to:

- review the school improvement plan so greater consideration is given to the actions necessary to improve teaching and the role of other leaders

- ensure the planned actions have clear goals for success which link to improvements in pupils' achievement and the role of all leaders in driving improvement is crystal clear
- review the roles of senior leaders so the responsibility for driving improvement is dispersed more evenly across the school
- build the governing bodies' confidence and ability to monitor the work of the school to ensure they are holding all senior leaders to account through well informed challenge
- identify the strengths and weaknesses within the governing body and plan future action to increase their effectiveness further.

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

### **External support**

The local authority has a good understanding of the school's strengths and the challenges you are facing. Consequently, it is providing additional support to help you become a good school at your next inspection. You are welcoming this support because it is proving beneficial in helping you to increase your skills in checking on teaching through opportunities to observe lessons jointly with a local authority officer and attend suitable training. The local authority has rightly identified your school to participate in a teaching and learning project which will bring expert advice and guidance to all staff and individual teachers. You and the local authority are hopeful this project will be a good vehicle for taking a step back, looking at what you already do and identifying the key factors that will improve teaching. The local authority is extending its support to the governing body. The school adviser has already provided some initial training which governors found useful. The adviser is also attending the special committee to support governors in reviewing information and asking the right questions.

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

Yours sincerely

Joanne Olsson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**