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Mr Simon Blight  
Headteacher  
Standens Barn Primary School  
Flaxwell Court  
Standens Barn  
Northampton  
NN3 9EH

Dear Mr Blight

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Standens Barn Primary School.**

Following my visit to your school on 30 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, all senior leaders, three members of the governing body and a school improvement adviser from the local authority. A tour of the school was undertaken with the headteacher. The school's development plan and post Ofsted action plan were evaluated. The findings of school and governor monitoring activities and the performance management of staff were discussed.

#### **Context**

There have been no significant contextual changes within the school since the section 5 inspection.

#### **Main findings**

The school has worked swiftly to begin to address the points for improvement raised at the last inspection. Its action plan is specific and makes clear the arrangements

for monitoring and the timescales to work to. Following input from the local authority, members of the governing body now better understand their role in monitoring and evaluating the school. They are beginning to question and challenge senior leaders about the school's performance data, but need further training in how to do this better.

There has been a whole school focus on adapting lessons more effectively to pupils' needs. This has increased the range of opportunities for pupils to work independently and increased the level of challenge given to pupils. As a result, more pupils are working towards the higher National Curriculum levels than before. The school has established collaboration with an outstanding provider and staff are benefitting from observing teaching and learning at this school. Along with very effective coaching and support from senior leaders within school, this has had a marked impact on improving teaching. The headteacher's use and monitoring of the impact of Pupil Premium funding to raise achievement is excellent.

Senior leaders and governors are taking 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:

- ensure that the governing body has the skills and expertise to fully evaluate the work of the school
- implement more rigorous systems for managing the performance of staff which are closely linked to pupils' achievement and progress
- monitor the impact of independent learning on pupil progress across the whole school
- schedule further visits to the school by HMI, initially to provide training for governors and then to monitor the progress of the school.

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

### **External support**

The school is drawing effectively on a range of external support. Staff are making good use of other local schools to help them recognise good and outstanding practice. The local authority is supporting members of the governing body in understanding their role in monitoring pupils' achievement.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**