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3 May 2013

Mrs Kath Evans  
Headteacher  
Oxspring Primary School  
Sheffield Road  
Oxspring  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S36 8YW

Dear Mrs Evans

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

Following my visit to your school on 2 May 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. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

#### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the assistant headteacher, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The school's improvement plan and the governing body's action plan were evaluated. You accompanied me on a tour of the school during which we made several brief lesson visits. I also looked at other documents including written feedback to teachers following lesson observations and minutes of the governing body meetings.

#### **Context**

One teacher is due to leave the school at the end of term. The school is seeking to appoint a new class teacher.

#### **Main findings**

The school has rightly focused on improving the quality of teaching. You have worked effectively with a Local Leader in Education to give teachers opportunities to see good practice in other schools. Teachers are using these experiences to think about their own

work and how they can improve it. They are currently considering ways they can improve their questioning skills to make sure each pupil is offered a good level of challenge.

You have observed lessons with external partners and this is helping to ensure that the judgements made about the quality of teaching are accurate. Teachers get helpful written comments following observations which highlight key strengths and areas to improve. However, these comments are not always linked clearly how actions will help pupils' learning.

The school development plan is focussed on the areas needing improvement highlighted at the last inspection. It includes who is responsible for checking on different areas and the timescales. However, it is not clear enough about how leaders will know if actions are effective. This makes it difficult for leaders and governors to check how well the school is doing in securing improvements. The responsibilities for different aspects of the school's work are shared among all teachers and this is something the school plans to review when a new teacher is appointed.

The progress individual pupils are making is being tracked carefully and the school is developing better ways of checking on how different groups of pupils are doing. This will help leaders to spot if any groups are not doing as well as they should and take action quickly.

Governors have taken swift action to improve their work. They are candid in evaluating their own strengths and equally evaluative of any weaknesses. They have used external support very well to improve the way they hold the school to account. The governing body has been restructured to concentrate on really important aspects of the school's work. For example there is now a committee focused purely on teaching and learning.

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, I recommend that further action is taken to:

- sharpen improvement planning so that it is easy for teachers, leaders and governors to check the progress the school is making towards improvements.
- improve teachers' questioning skills so that they ask questions which offer the right level of challenge to individual pupils
- sustain a rapid rate of improvement by reviewing subject and leadership responsibilities.

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

### **External support**

The school have made effective use of external support. In particular, they have valued the work of the local authority in securing the support of a Local Leader in Education. This has been successful in helping the school to improve the way it analyses the progress made by different groups of pupils

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

Yours sincerely

Joan Hewitt

**Her Majesty's Inspector**