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10 May 2013

Mr P Gerrish  
Headteacher  
Fleetwood Chaucer Community Primary School  
Chaucer Road  
Fleetwood  
Lancashire  
FY7 6QN

Dear Mr Gerrish

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Fleetwood Chaucer Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 9 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 in March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with yourself, senior leaders and managers, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. 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**

There have been no significant changes to the school's context since the March inspection.

### **Main findings**

You are responding positively to the findings from the recent inspection. You accept the judgements are a fair reflection of the school and are using the key messages as a springboard to grasp future success. Governors and senior leaders share your

enthusiasm and confidence that the school can become good by the next inspection. All agree there are no significant barriers to halt your progress. As a result, there is a common sense of purpose and everyone is pulling in the same direction to reach the same goals.

The planned actions to improve the school are firmly based on the right priorities. You know what needs to be done and you are taking the right action to improve teaching and to share leadership responsibility across the school. You have already put some of the building blocks in place by establishing key leadership teams and updating the systems to check on the quality of teaching. However, it is still early days and there is little evidence to show the difference these changes are having in classrooms. Your own data show achievement in mathematics remains relatively weaker than reading and writing and although standards look set to rise this year, the jump is unlikely to be great enough to close the gap compared to the national picture. Nonetheless, you have taken immediate action to raise teachers' expectations. The close consideration you have given to the learning targets for each pupil sends out a very clear message that satisfactory progress across the school is no longer good enough. However, your plans to hold teachers to account in reaching these challenging goals are still in the early stages.

Some of your planned actions lack urgency. The timescales for some of your proposed changes are too long and some essential activities are not happening quickly enough. Although you intend to provide greater support to teachers who need extra help to improve, this is happening too late in the term to ensure all teachers are ready to hit the ground running in the new academic year.

Subject leaders for English and mathematics know what they need to do to bring about improvement. You have rightly recognised mathematics teaching needs to be stripped back and rebuilt with a much greater focus on looking at what pupils can already do and what skills and knowledge they need to be successful in their next year group. You recognise that the systems in place to check the work of the school have not always been sharp enough to help the school become good. As a result you have overhauled the programme to gain a much better view of teaching over time. This is a positive move. However, your own evidence indicates some of the feedback teachers receive is not always precise enough to really make a difference to what they do in their classrooms on a day-by-day basis.

The governing body knows the school well because there is an established committee which meets frequently to look at the school's progress and ask relevant questions of senior leaders. Governors also gain first-hand knowledge of the school through visits to classrooms and discussions with leaders. Governors are not complacent. They are keen to keep pace with improvements across the rest of the school. They acknowledge they need to give greater consideration to planning their next steps to help them improve further.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- review the timescales for some of the actions in the school development plan so key weaknesses are tackled with greater urgency
- plan the next steps the governing body needs to take in order to improve their effectiveness further
- provide teachers with precise feedback so they are in no doubt about what they need to do to improve.

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

### **External support**

You and the governing body welcome the additional support and challenge the local authority provides. To date, this support has proved to be effective as it meets the needs of the school and provides extra expertise to help tackle key shortcomings. In attending governing body meetings, the school adviser has promoted the confidence and competence of governors so they can ask challenging questions and hold school leaders more robustly to account. Opportunities for middle leaders to observe teaching with the school adviser is helping to build skills and support the headteacher in his drive to spread out leadership responsibilities. Plans are in place for a local authority consultant to work with teachers to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics. Links with another school in the authority are being exploited to develop teaching and the role of middle leaders through opportunities for teachers and leaders to work closely with other colleagues.

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**