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22 May 2013

Mrs W Smith  
Headteacher  
Barleyhurst Park Primary  
Forfar Drive  
Milton Keynes  
MK3 7NA

Dear Mrs Smith

### **Requires improvement: monitoring visit to Barleyhurst Park Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 22 May 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 I met with you, other senior leaders, four governors including the Chair of Governors, and a representative of the local authority. We visited every class to see the pupils at work. I looked at pupils' books and teachers' planning. I scrutinised a range documents, including the school's improvement plan.

#### **Context**

One teacher has retired and another will be leaving on 31 May 2013. One of these posts has been filled and the appointment process for the other post is underway.

## **Main findings**

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The revised improvement plan shows clearly what actions will be taken in order to improve the school. They are the right actions. Teachers, leaders and governors are determined to make these improvements. There are challenging targets for raising standards in the plan, and actions aimed at improving the achievement of different groups of pupils (for example, pupils eligible for free school meals). The headteacher has made the elements of good teaching clear to all staff, and she expects teaching to improve rapidly.

Leaders have acted quickly and effectively. As a result, there has been good progress since the inspection. Teachers now plan lessons that aim to stretch all pupils. Leaders check teachers' planning every week, and look at pupils' books weekly to make sure pupils are being challenged effectively. A training programme for teachers is now in place, aimed at the key elements of teaching that need to improve. Individual teachers are also getting bespoke support from leaders. Marking in mathematics is getting better because pupils are given more opportunities to make the improvements suggested by teachers. The school's information about pupils' achievement is detailed, although it is not clear what proportion of pupils are making more than expected progress.

The governing body has had training to help them analyse information about pupils' achievement, including the kinds of questions governors ought to be asking of leaders. This means that they are better placed to effectively challenge the school. The Chair of Governors has begun some training specific to his role. Governors have been involved in the development of the improvement plan, but their role in evaluating the school's progress is unclear.

The local authority is providing effective support. The improvement partner visits the school regularly to measure its progress. His reports make clear judgements and recommendations based on a range of appropriate evidence. He has brokered support for the school, for example from a mathematics consultant. He has also made links with other local schools, for example Bishop Parker Catholic School, so teachers can visit them to observe high quality teaching.

Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- develop the school's information about pupils' progress so leaders, governors and teachers are clear about the proportions of pupils making more than expected progress
- clarify how governors will evaluate the school's progress.

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

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Milton Keynes. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Haynes  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**