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6 June 2013

Mrs Antoinette Butler-Willis  
Headteacher  
Crown Wood Primary School  
Opladen Way  
Bracknell  
Berkshire  
RG12 0PE

Dear Mrs Butler-Willis

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Crown Wood Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 6 June 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 held meetings with you, your deputy, four members of the governing body, the senior primary adviser from the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement/action plan. With you, I paid brief visit to lessons in every lesson and talked to individual pupils about their learning.

#### **Context**

There have been no changes in staffing since the section 5 inspection.

#### **Main findings**

Although initially disappointed by the outcome of the section 5 inspection, senior leaders have wasted no time in pursuing their drive to make Crown Wood a good

school. The headteacher is using performance management procedures adeptly to secure better teaching across the school so that pupils are better stretched.

Senior and middle leaders have, since the section 5 inspection, completed training on how to observe lessons. The impact of this training is shown in the written feedback that teachers receive following a lesson observation. This feedback clarifies precisely the steps that individual teachers must take to teach good lessons. In a similar vein, the headteacher and deputy headteacher undertake reviews of pupils' work and write pithy and pertinent commentaries to individual staff which detail elements which must improve if pupils are to make better progress.

Governors assert that they now receive more and better information about pupils' progress, enabling them to challenge senior leaders. The headteacher affirms that governors have, rightly, become more demanding as they seek to fulfil their role effectively. Governors now dig down into the performance of different groups. They are clear, for example, that the gap between the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals and others has widened recently. This widening gap is seen because attainment of those pupils not eligible for free school meals has improved. Encouragingly, governors talk about the impact of their actions and those of other senior leaders since the section 5 inspection, rather than merely describing the actions that have been taken. Fundamentally, governors understand the challenges that the school faces and know what is being done and what remains to be done to tackle these.

Since the section 5 inspection, the school has rightly devised a new calculation policy to underpin better progress for pupils in mathematics. Additionally, the school has judicious plans to conduct a full analysis of the gaps in pupils' mathematical knowledge so that these may be properly filled and firm foundations thus laid for better learning in this subject. However, teachers' mathematical subject knowledge requires some refreshment to enable them to teach mathematics confidently and consistently well.

During visits to lessons, particularly in Key Stage 2 and in subjects beyond English and mathematics, teachers sometimes missed opportunities to be very explicit to pupils about potential learning in literacy or numeracy. Consequently, pupils missed the chance to develop and extend their literacy and numeracy skills further.

The headteacher has, sensibly, written a school improvement plan that is closely linked to the recommendations in the section 5 report. The plan requires fine tuning so that all staff and governors have complete clarity about their contribution to improving the school.

*Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:*

- *build teachers' mathematical subject knowledge*
- *clarify, at a whole school level but initially in Key Stage 2, potential literacy and mathematical learning in subjects beyond English and mathematics so that teachers expect pupils to develop and extend their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum*
- *fine tune the school improvement plan so that senior and middle leaders, and governors are aware of the contribution they must make to improve the school.*

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority believes, rightly, that the school is making accelerated progress towards becoming good. The senior primary adviser has verified the headteacher's and deputy headteacher's judgments on teaching to ensure that they are accurate. She has organised useful lesson observation training for senior and middle leaders; this has been instrumental in ensuring that staff receive accurate feedback on their work. Governors have benefited from training provided by the local authority. Overall, local authority support has been effective in supporting Crown Wood Primary on its journey to becoming a good school.

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

Yours sincerely

Bradley Simmons  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**