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5 June 2013

Mrs Sharon Finn  
Headteacher  
Lambs Lane Primary School  
Back Lane  
Reading  
RG7 1JB

Dear Mrs Finn

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lambs Lane Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 5 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, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, a representative of the local authority and the Chair of the Governing Body plus two other governors to discuss the action taken since the previous inspection. The school's post-inspection action plan was evaluated and I looked at documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work. I also accompanied you on a walk around the school.

### **Context**

There have been no contextual changes to the governing body, staffing or pupil numbers since the previous inspection. The deputy headteacher is still on secondment at a local school and the inclusion manager is still on maternity leave. Both senior members of staff will return to the school in September 2013.

## **Main findings**

You and other senior leaders have reacted positively to the previous inspection report. Together you have written an action plan that contains some sensible and well-judged strategies to address all the areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection. One issue identified by the inspection in March was for improvement plans to contain clear targets for measuring pupils' progress. This issue has been clearly addressed in the new post-inspection action plan; although, some targets need to be reviewed in order to ensure that they provide a sufficient level of challenge for all pupils. The continued absence of two senior members of staff has affected the capacity of the school's leadership team to implement the action plan. As a result, the rate of implementation has been steady rather than rapid. The return of these teachers to the school in September 2013 will strengthen the school's capacity for improvement.

Some effective training has been provided to all staff on how best to use questioning in lessons to check pupils' learning. Training and the monitoring of teachers' planning is also beginning to have a positive impact on how well teachers are matching work to pupils' needs. Since the previous inspection, lesson observations and individual support have been largely focussed on the weaker areas of teaching in the school. However, you sensibly plan to carry out a broader range of lessons observations across all classes next week in order to monitor the impact of training given to all teachers. In order for governors to more easily evaluate the impact of actions taken to improve teaching the action plan needs to contain more measurable targets for the quality of teaching.

Governors spoken to during this inspection accept that in the past they have relied too heavily on you to provide them with information on the impact of the school's work on pupils' achievement. Following the inspection, stronger links have been established with subject leaders and their role in monitoring the work of the school has been strengthened. In particular, the post-inspection action plan clearly indicates the role of the governing body in monitoring and evaluating the impact of actions taken. Although there have been some improvements to governance since the previous inspection the review of governance recommended by this inspection has not been carried out. A date for a review has only recently been agreed.

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, I recommend that further action is taken to:

- review the level challenge in some of the targets that have been set for pupils' attainment and progress

- set clear and measurable targets for the expected quality of teaching by specific dates, so that governors can more effectively evaluate the rate of improvement in teaching practice
- carry out the review of governance recommended in the previous inspection report so that further areas for improvement in governance can be clearly identified.

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

### **External support**

There is a positive, constructive relationship between the school and the local authority. A school improvement officer has provided some effective support to you and senior leaders in writing the post-inspection action plan and some well-targeted support has been provided by an external advanced skills teacher to improve teaching. Some members of the governing body have also benefitted from training offered by the local authority.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Sanderson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**