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11 June 2013

Mrs D Stevens  
Headteacher  
Bond Primary School  
Bond Road  
Mitcham  
CR4 3HG

Dear Mrs Stevens

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bond Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 11 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 February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you, other senior staff and teachers, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. We also visited a number of lessons together. I evaluated the school's post-Ofsted action plan and scrutinised a range of other documents, including local authority reports about the school's progress since the inspection.

### **Context**

Since the inspection, two teachers have left the school. A Year 3 teacher has recently joined the school and two additional members of the governing body have been recruited.

## **Main findings**

You have acted rapidly to address the areas for improvement identified at the inspection. You have robustly tackled the weakest teaching and increased the proportion of good and outstanding teaching. Lessons are monitored much more regularly and rigorously and books more frequently scrutinised to ensure that school policies and initiatives are being followed consistently.

Improvements to the leadership and management of teaching and learning are welcomed by staff. Teachers say that they have a clearer understanding of what is expected because lesson observations and book scrutinies are more sharply focused. They appreciate the increased challenge and support provided by the subject leaders for English and mathematics. These leaders check teachers' planning each week and provide helpful feedback on how it can be improved. Lesson observations identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual lessons well, but do not always analyse with sufficient rigour the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. Strategies to improve the quality and frequency of extended writing are working and raising attainment in writing, particularly in Key Stage 1. During the visit, pupils were seen to be engaged well by good quality, independent writing tasks. Teachers have reduced the amount of time that pupils sit and listen to their explanations.

Teachers' commitment to improving their practice is impressive. They value opportunities to observe each other's teaching and share their planning. Visits to see expert practitioners in other schools are helping to improve teaching and more are planned for later in the term. Teachers' marking is of good quality but pupils are not routinely required to respond to their comments; this risks the helpful feedback being wasted.

Leaders and managers ensured that all teachers helped formulate the post-Ofsted action plan. As a result, all staff understand their roles in helping the school to become good. The plan sets clear milestones to help leaders and managers check how well the school is doing. Staff now need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation by mapping out exactly how much progress each group of pupils must make so that they achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 6.

These improvements have been made despite the school having only a small leadership team, which has further reduced in size due to the need to plug gaps in the teaching staff. The school now needs to bring forward planned restructuring to ensure senior staff have the capacity to strengthen the quality, frequency of robustness of self-evaluation. This will help ensure that there is no slippage in the school's journey to becoming good within two years.

Governors have been galvanised by the last inspection and are much more effective in holding the school to account. Meetings are now more sharply focused on the

areas key to improving the school and on pupils' achievement., Governors take an active role in monitoring the school, for example through visits and work scrutinies. As a result, they have a good understanding of which aspects of the school are improving most quickly and which need additional attention. Governors have a good understanding of pupils' achievement information and have benefitted from training provided by the local authority. They are much more confident in scrutinising the link between pupils' achievement and teachers' progression through the pay-scales. The external review of governance – recommended at the last inspection – is booked to take place later in the term.

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:

- map out precisely the progress that each group of pupils needs to make so that they achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 6
- accelerate the pace of leadership restructuring to ensure the school can closely monitor the impact of all aspects of its work on pupils' achievement
- make the most of teachers' good quality written feedback by ensuring pupils respond to teachers' written questions and advice more frequently and quickly.

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 school is benefitting from increased and effective support from the local authority. This has included support in ensuring the school's post-Ofsted action plan is of good quality. The local authority has provided governor training and brokered peer support for the headteacher, together with opportunities for teaching staff to observe good practice in other schools. Local authority reports helpfully track the school's progress in addressing the areas identified for improvement and provide good quality guidance on how to sharpen strategic planning and self-evaluation.

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

Yours sincerely

Daniel Burton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**