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24 June 2013

Mrs P Smart  
Acting headteacher  
Kempsford CofE Primary School  
High Street  
Kempsford  
Gloucestershire  
GL7 4EY

Dear Mrs Smart

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kempsford CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 24 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 April 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you, Year 6 pupils, four members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a Local Leader of Education (LLE) to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated and I also did a tour of the school with you.

### **Context**

There have been no staff changes since the inspection in April 2013, but a number of new governors have been appointed. From September 2013, an executive headteacher from a local outstanding school has been temporarily appointed to support the acting headteacher. Three teachers will leave at the end of this school year and replacements appointed ready for when the school moves from five to four classes.

## **Main findings**

You are leading the school in a determined manner and swiftly getting to grips with those aspects which require improvement. Your 'Rapid Action Plan' (RAP) is sharply focused with appropriate actions identified. I was also impressed with how you track and check the improvements being, which have been organised in a timely fashion. By setting out the minimum expectations for all teachers, you are developing a culture where the right level of work is set and all the pupils benefit from suitably challenging lessons. By implanting a systematic way of recording pupil progress and meeting with their teachers to discuss this, you are ensuring that there is a shared understanding of accountability for pupil achievement. Individual teachers have reflected on their own style of teaching and are attending courses to improve and strengthen their practice. The introduction of ways to check and monitor the quality of teaching and relate it to the salaries that teachers receive is in the very early stages of development. This aspect of accountability needs to be much sharper.

You are starting to raise the pupils' understanding of the importance of spelling, punctuation, accurate use of grammar and writing in a clear and legible style. You are fully aware that a more interesting approach of subjects needs to be introduced to fully challenge the pupils. You also know that some teachers do not always mark pupils' work well enough, but the new marking policy has been agreed. The governing body is monitoring how well the marking policy is being implemented by scrutinising pupils' work books. As we discussed, it will be important to evaluate this work to ensure if further action is needed.

Your action plan is detailed and sets a clear agenda for improvement. Actions address each key issue systematically and there is a clear timeline of when improvements will be introduced. The local authority and an LLE are working closely with you to develop this plan, which includes clear success criteria and ways in which progress will be checked and challenged. The local authority has organised a range of training to support the development of subject leadership, which is in its infancy.

Many of the governors are new to the position and are sensibly taking the opportunity to seek induction training and gain a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The governing body has made a wise decision about delaying the appointment of a substantive headteacher.

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:

- enable the acting headteacher, teaching staff and the governing body to observe best practice at the executive headteacher's school and other outstanding local schools
- establish robust systems to measure the effectiveness of staff and ensure that this process is linked closely to the salary they receive
- develop the role of the subject and key stage leaders to support the work of the acting headteacher in taking greater accountability for the progress pupils make.

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

### **External support**

You and the Chair of the Governing Body are drawing effectively on the expert advice from a nearby outstanding school. Specialist help from the local authority's consultant for mathematics has been used well to support the teachers' accurate understanding of the levels of work that pupils achieve. Similar support from the local authority's English consultant is planned to take place shortly. The recent review of the governing body undertaken by the local authority has accurately identified a significant number of areas that governors need to develop. They have set up a suitable programme of training and support.

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

Yours sincerely

Lorna Brackstone

**Her Majesty's Inspector**