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16 July 2013

Mr Gary Murrell  
Headteacher  
Marlborough Primary School  
London Road  
Isleworth  
Middlesex  
TW7 5XA

Dear Mr Murrell

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

Following my visit to your school on 16 July 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 May 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During my visit I met with you and your deputy headteacher, members of your governing body, your middle leaders and the Senior Education Adviser from the local authority. I reviewed your school development plans, the current information about pupils' achievements, your records showing the monitoring of teaching, and reports by the local authority. We toured the school together to look at pupils' work and discuss developments in teaching.

### **Context**

Since the previous inspection two new governors have been appointed to the governing body.

## **Main findings**

Your and your leaders are taking purposeful, well-focused action to move the school forward from requiring improvement to good. Your team are committed and very determined to ensure that teaching improves quickly and provides good opportunities for all pupils to learn well. The pace of change is good. You have taken swift action to review and improve your systems for monitoring teachers' planning, the quality of teaching, and for checking pupils' progress in their books. You are making sure that training sessions for all staff are increasingly tailored to support their needs as teachers and teaching assistants. Teaching is improving and you are offering good support to teachers who are not yet planning and teaching to a good standard. Equally, you have challenged inadequate practice. You have given a very clear message that there is only room in the school for staff who are committed to the rapid improvement that is needed.

You are requiring your middle leaders to take much more responsibility for the staff they manage, holding them to account for planning, teaching and the quality of their marking. Joint lesson observations with you, your deputy headteacher and the adviser from the local authority, combined with regular scrutiny of pupils' work and analysis of performance information, are giving middle leaders the necessary skills to lead improvements in teaching. They are more conversant with and confident in analysing the data in the annually produced RAISEonline document and able to compare the impact of the school's work against expectations nationally for pupils' progress and attainment.

Middle leaders are benefitting from partnership work with leaders from The Blue School, especially in developing better teaching of mathematics. The reciprocal relationship is helping your staff see models of best practice at The Blue School and examine how these can be used at Marlborough. We saw some good examples of pupils applying their mathematical knowledge to practical problems, and pupils completing different activities and using resources according to their level of ability. In some lessons teachers were being effective because they were spotting which pupils were ready to move on to harder work. Training sessions for staff are starting to help teachers and teaching assistants consider how to help pupils apply their mathematical knowledge and skills across all aspects of the curriculum.

The new marking policy and emphasis on giving pupils time to respond to teachers' comments are starting to show impact. We agreed that the next step is to make sure that teachers check the quality of pupils' responses so that it deepens pupils' understanding.

Your school development plan and its supporting documents are tightly focused on the achievement of different groups of pupils and the areas requiring improvement from your recent inspection. There is a good link between your use of performance data, findings from lesson observations and work scrutiny, and how you use this to set targets for teachers. The success criteria to measure the impact of your plans are demanding and it is good to see regular check points to test how well the school

is moving forward. We discussed the findings in two recent Ofsted reports, *Unseen Children: access and achievement 20 years on* and *The most able students: are they doing well enough?* We identified, as a result, that leaders and governors must sustain a very sharp focus upon the progress of your most able pupils, and at the same time be able to regularly evaluate the impact of pupil premium funding on the achievement of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Governors increasingly understand how the heightened expectations to hold all leaders to account for school improvement. Recently, your governors have been asking more demanding questions about teachers' performance and have begun to challenge you more robustly about the performance information in your reports. Governors have devised an initial action plan for their development but this is not detailed enough in responding to key national priorities for good and outstanding governance. Your Chair and Vice Chair have quickly grasped what they need to focus on in the action plan, having attended a training seminar for governors led by Her Majesty's Inspectors.

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:

- ensure that the governing body uses its most recent skills' audit to develop a more comprehensive action plan to strengthen governance
- make sure that there is a consistent focus on how well the most able pupils and those eligible for the pupil premium achieve
- use findings from Ofsted survey reports and good practice examples to further develop high quality learning in mathematics.

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 provides very good support to the school and is setting high expectations for its leaders and governors. The local authority has brokered effective partnership support with The Blue School. The local authority adviser's work is having positive impact in developing leaders' skills to assess the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Joanna Beckford-Hall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**