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12 September 2013

Wendy Ramshaw  
Norwell CofE Primary School  
School Lane  
Norwell  
Newark  
NG23 6JP

Dear Miss Ramshaw

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

Following my visit to your school on 11 September 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report my findings. 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.

This visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in June 2013. It was carried out under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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

- ensure that it is clear exactly who will evaluate the actions in the school development plan and how they will do it, so that the governing body is clear about what sort of monitoring information should come to them at each meeting
- make arrangements to plan for setting up formal links between Norwell School and St Matthew's School to follow the appointment of a new executive headteacher
- re-evaluate the curriculum, particularly the time allocated to swimming, and the organisation of classes to ensure that resources are being used most effectively for the overall needs of all pupils.

### **Evidence**

During the visit I met with the headteacher and another senior leader, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I toured the school site and classrooms and evaluated the school improvement plan. I also discussed with the headteacher, the impact of the new marking policy, aspects of the school's approach to the performance management of staff, monitoring the progress of pupils and how this was communicated to them and to their parents.

## **Context**

The present executive headteacher has decided to retire at the end of the Spring term in 2014. The governing body of Norwell School has created a joint committee with the governing body from St Matthew's School to begin the process of recruiting a replacement.

## **Main findings**

As indicated in the June inspection report, many actions designed to address issues identified by the inspector had already been started. Because of this, despite the relatively short period between the inspection in June and the start of the Autumn term, there is now a new marking policy and a real focus on a series of non-negotiable elements for pupils to include in their writing for all subjects. The governing body has been closely involved in the re-shaping of the school development plan, which addresses all the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. A new calculation policy is now in place, but it is too early to be able to evaluate its impact.

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 has used external support well, including additional time from the local authority school improvement adviser, networks within the local Tuxford family of schools and the support from a local leader in education arranged by the local authority. The headteacher is actively seeking further opportunities to work collaboratively with other small rural schools in similar situations.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Nottinghamshire and the Nottingham Diocese.

Yours sincerely

John Peckham

**Her Majesty's Inspector**