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9 September 2013

Mrs Natasha Austin-Cooke  
Street Lane Primary School  
Street Lane  
Denby  
Ripley  
Derbyshire  
DE5 8NE

Dear Mrs Austin-Cooke

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

Following my visit to your school on 9 September, 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 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.

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:

- sharpen your school improvement plan by including clear success criteria relating to the progress and attainment of groups of pupils, so that governors and senior leaders can evaluate the impact of the school's actions more frequently
- ensure that teachers who are responsible for subjects are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school
- ensure that the most able pupils are provided with work which continually challenges their thinking.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. We conducted a tour of the school. I evaluated your plans for improvement and considered documentation relating to the monitoring of teaching. I reviewed your most recent data on pupils' progress and

attainment. I looked at a range of pupils' work and evaluated the quality of marking. I scrutinised minutes of meetings of the governing body.

## **Context**

Shortly after the section 5 inspection, you commenced your position as headteacher on 1 June 2013. One teacher has left the school and the governing body has appointed an experienced teacher to teach the mixed-age Reception and Key Stage 1 class from September 2013.

## **Main findings**

You have used your commitment and enthusiasm to inspire governors and staff to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement. Teachers have responded quickly and are working closely together to address the issues which have been identified for improvement.

You have wasted no time in raising expectations about the quality of teaching and what pupils can achieve. Teachers have responded enthusiastically and are now assessing pupils' needs more accurately and are setting more challenging work. They are giving younger pupils more opportunities to choose how they present their work. Teachers are providing pupils with more detailed guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils are demonstrating how they have responded to this guidance and are making more rapid progress as a result. Nevertheless, your detailed tracking of pupils' learning shows that the most able pupils are not attaining the high standards they are capable of.

You have further increased the rigour for checking the quality of teaching. Your procedures draw together evidence from a wide range of sources including pupils' work and visits to lessons. You know where teaching requires the most improvement and you are taking effective action to help teachers and teaching assistants to improve their practice. Teachers who have responsibility for leading subjects, remain insufficiently involved in this important improvement work.

The governing body has arranged for an external review of governance which is scheduled for next week. This has not slowed the improvements which the governing body is already making. It has responded well to training delivered by senior leaders. Governors are now using information about pupils' achievements to challenge school leaders more rigorously about the performance of the school. However, their improvement plans do not include sufficient small targets to track progress over time and hold the school's leaders to account as well as they could.

## **External support**

The appointment, brokered by the local authority, of an experienced headteacher to mentor the headteacher in her new role has been effective in enabling her to make a positive start.

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

Yours sincerely

David Carter

**Her Majesty's Inspector**