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Jill Davis
Executive Headteacher
Terrington St John Primary School
School Road
Terrington St John
Wisbech
PE14 7SG

Dear Ms Davis

Special measures monitoring inspection of Terrington St John Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 2 October 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in April 2013.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with you and the assistant headteacher, three governors, two members of staff, a group of pupils and a representative of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

Following the previous inspection, the executive headteacher left the school and you have been appointed as executive headteacher. You are currently leading Terrington St John and the two other schools in The Three School Federation. There have been a number of other staff changes. A new assistant headteacher took up her post in

September. One higher-level teaching assistant, one teaching assistant and two new midday supervisors have also joined the staff. The school is planning to become a sponsored academy later this school year.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

You have started the process of improving the school. For example, pupils are now having more opportunities to write, and your new marking and presentation policies are beginning to improve the quality of work in books. In response to concerns about lunchtime behaviour, you have employed additional lunchtime supervision. As a result, playtimes are happier and safer. Visits to lessons and discussions with pupils indicate that they are consistently showing better attitudes to learning. Conversations with staff show that they too are now enjoying school more. Staff welcome the changes you are making and are very supportive of your high ambition for the pupils.

The school's post-inspection action plan sets out very clearly what you are going to do to improve the school and who will be responsible for leading each action. The plan outlines how staff will check whether actions are working and includes ambitious targets linked to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. To gain an independent view of how well the plan is being implemented, a local headteacher is involved in the evaluation of its impact.

The governing body is much more aware of its responsibilities in checking the work of the school. It now receives accurate information from school leaders and so can ask pertinent questions about pupils' achievement. Members of the governing body are reorganising the way in which they work. For example, named governors now have responsibility for holding leaders to account for the progress of disadvantaged children and for improving attendance.

The local authority produced a statement of action following the previous inspection. The statement has a number of weaknesses. For example, it does not explain the factors that were considered which led to the decision to keep the school open. It identifies a range of support the local authority will secure to help the school. However, to date, it has resulted in very little help. Much more useful has been the part played by the local authority in commissioning you to act as executive headteacher and the appointment of an additional governor who is guiding the school through the process of becoming a sponsored academy.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is not fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Norfolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Anthony O'Malley
Her Majesty's Inspector