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26 September 2013

Mrs Wendy Zaidi  
Headteacher  
Rolls Crescent Primary School  
Rolls Crescent  
Hulme  
Manchester  
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Dear Mrs Zaidi

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Rolls Crescent Primary School, Manchester**

Following my visit to your school on 25 September 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on 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 June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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 action plan has milestones and quantitative targets, particularly for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, and makes clear who is to lead each aspect of the plan
- arrange for the local authority to conduct a review of teaching and learning to
  - a) provide a baseline profile of the quality of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics
  - b) provide an overview of where improvement is needed in reading, writing and mathematics
  - c) secure the judgements of teaching made by senior leaders

- carry out an external review of governance to clarify expectations of the role of governor, to identify training needs and to support the formation of a group of governors to take prime responsibility for monitoring the school's progress
- seek support in confirming the data regarding pupils' progress and targets set, and in developing teachers' expertise in tracking the progress of differing groups and in matching work to pupils' needs.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated and data regarding pupils' progress was reviewed.

## **Context**

Since the inspection in June, a Key Stage 1 teacher has returned on a part-time basis, a newly qualified teacher has been appointed and is working with Year 2, and two experienced teachers have joined the school and are working with Year 6. An additional class of reception year children has been established, fully funded by the local authority, and is being taught by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader.

## **Main findings**

The headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body accept that the school has not kept abreast of educational developments in recent years, especially regarding the links between teaching and pupils' progress and what now counts as 'a good school'. They also accept that there are inconsistencies to iron out in teaching and gaps in leadership expertise to fill in order to secure higher achievement. These aspects are reflected in the action plan.

As well as listing actions to improve the quality of teaching and leadership and management, the action plan includes steps to strengthen behaviour management, which was mentioned as an issue in some sessions seen in the inspection in June. Although there are indicative targets, the plan lacks clear milestones and quantitative targets, especially in relation to the quality of teaching, and also a clear indication of who is to take the lead in implementing each aspect. Although senior leaders have an overview of teaching in general, they do not have a profile of strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning of reading, writing and mathematics to guide decisions about where improvement is most needed. Such information is also key to planning a programme of mentoring and coaching which the school intends. The data seen threw up some anomalies concerning the progress of different year groups in reading, writing and mathematics, and also the progress expected in the current school year. This raises questions concerning the reliability of data and of judgements about teaching and learning. It is timely for the school to take advantage of expertise within the local authority to review the use of data and to develop confidence throughout the school in using data to inform decisions about teaching.

The school has drawn on links with other schools to view effective practice and more visits and links are planned. Well-founded decisions have been taken to continue some intervention programmes and also to introduce a support programme in mathematics for some pupils in Key Stage 1 and Year 3. New ways of working have been introduced: the indications are that there have been fewer lunchtime 'time-out' sessions following the introduction this term of a 'traffic lights' warning scheme.

As indicated over a year ago, the Chair of the Governing Body is stepping down from the role. It is an appropriate time to request an external review of governance and to identify the aspects where training would be beneficial to ensure that the new Chair and other governors hold the school to full account.

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 has had only light involvement with the school over the last few years. It has given guidance on drafting the action plan and offered support in linking with other schools as well as possible specialist support from within the authority. Similarly, local authority personnel are available to conduct a review of teaching and learning and to support the school and governors in monitoring the progress and evaluating the impact of the action plan.

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

Yours sincerely

Sonja Øyen

**Her Majesty's Inspector**