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26 September 2013

Miss Alice Brown  
Headteacher  
St Mary's CofE Primary School  
Lansdown View  
Timsbury  
Bath  
BA2 0JR

Dear Miss Brown

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Mary's CofE Primary School**

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 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 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 school development plans and direct improvement work with teachers maintain an achievable pace of change
- introduce a clear monitoring strategy that enables senior leaders and the governing body to systematically evaluate the impact of improvements on a regular basis.

### **Evidence**

During the visit I met with you and your deputy headteacher, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I looked at the file of evidence collected by the

school, including records of outcomes of monitoring activities and records of lesson observations. I also evaluated the school's improvement plan.

### **Main findings**

School leaders have moved swiftly since the inspection to drive forward the school's improvement agenda. New approaches to improve the quality of pupils' handwriting, presentation of work in pupils' books and the overall classroom environment have been introduced and are beginning to impact positively on the quality of teaching and the rate of learning. The senior leadership team has been restructured so that senior staff are well positioned to deliver the school's key priorities.

The governing body have improved their use and understanding of progress data and have given careful consideration to how they monitor the school improvement plan. The governing body and senior leadership of the school share high expectations of pupil progress and these are communicated by setting challenging academic targets for all pupils in the school. Governors have a good understanding of the current rates of progress being achieved and are focused on driving these upward.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection. I will return to the school within the next twelve months to evaluate the school's progress toward becoming good.

### **External support**

The school is making effective use of the support on offer from the local authority. The local authority is providing consultant support for whole school work on learning and a bespoke package of support from local good or better schools for the headteacher. The local authority is also convening a series of formal meetings with the school to evaluate the impact of support.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Bath and North East Somerset.

Yours sincerely

Phillip Minns  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**