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4 October 2013

Amanda Dawson  
Headteacher  
Mellers Primary and Nursery School  
Norton Street  
Radford  
Nottingham  
NG7 3HJ

Dear Ms Dawson

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Mellers Primary and Nursery School**

Following my visit to your school on 3 October 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 May 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:

- improve governance to ensure governors are able to contribute confidently to accurate school self-evaluation, school improvement planning and prioritising actions for their work
- ensure that the work with pupils' families is integrated into school improvement planning so that this is also contributing to raising standards
- create much sharper and specific performance management targets for all staff which are measureable and relate to improving standards.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, six members 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. School and external monitoring activities were looked at and the performance management of staff was discussed.

## **Context**

There have been no significant contextual changes since the section 5 inspection. The school has recently secured a new inclusion manager on long-term loan from the local authority.

## **Main findings**

Staff and governors are now using assessment data more intelligently to ask questions about the progress and achievement of different groups of pupils, adjusting support for pupils as needed. Further staff training, mentoring for new staff and coaching from experienced colleagues within school has begun to improve consistency in the quality of teaching. The school has recently set higher standards for the quality of the displays and made further improvements to the school environment to promote learning. For example, all reading corners in classrooms have been upgraded to stimulate pupils' enjoyment of books, and the playground now boasts the addition of an outdoor theatre which will aid pupils' confidence in speaking in front of others.

The marking of pupils' work is being closely checked by subject leaders to ensure that this is thorough and that pupils are acting upon teachers' advice. A new calculation policy gives a very clear steer to staff about progression in mathematics across the school, plus there is more emphasis on planning for problem solving in other subject areas. Staff have increased the amount of writing expected of pupils outside of the literacy lessons, so pupils are practising their writing skills more. The high expectations that staff have for pupils' handwriting and presentation is resulting in pupils taking an increased pride in their written work.

Whilst school action planning has been developed since the last inspection and appropriately focuses the school's work, it does not incorporate the important work the school is currently undertaking, or planning to undertake, in consulting with stakeholders and working with families.

Staff performance management targets are not based closely enough on the school's targets for raising pupils' achievement and progress. Leaders do not have precise targets based on raising standards in their areas of responsibility. Highly effective parent support work and the strong partnership involvement with a wide range of agencies have impacted positively on raising attendance. The school continues to work on its recent success of also improving punctuality.

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 is drawing well upon the external support provided to the school by the local authority and other commissioned partners. This has included work with the local authority governor support team, which led to a recent formal audit of governance. The governing body recognises the necessity to build on this and undertake further training to support their understanding and focus their work. The school has also worked very successfully with a primary education consultant and received support from a national leader in education, which has been beneficial specifically to reviewing the school calculation policy and to providing challenge for school self-evaluation. School leaders will continue to draw on external support, for example in developing effective performance management across the school and in moderating their assessment data, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**