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7 October 2013

Mrs Louise White  
Headteacher  
Moorside Junior School  
Harrogate Road  
Ripon  
North Yorkshire  
HG4 1SU

Dear Mrs White

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Moorside Junior School, North Yorkshire**

Following my visit to your school on 4 October 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 July 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 more members of the governing body are involved in checking the work of senior leaders more rigorously so that are better placed to hold them to account for the work they do, particularly in relation to improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, representatives of the governing body and the local authority. I reviewed the school improvement plan, the local authority support plan and made brief visits to all classes.

## **Context**

The current headteacher was appointed shortly before the recent inspection. Three new permanent teachers commenced at the beginning of September 2013, one of these is also the deputy headteacher. A fourth member of staff is due to commence at the beginning of the spring term 2014. Given that there are five classes this represents a significant change of personnel.

## **Main findings**

The drive to raise achievement did not commence after the previous inspection but rather a couple of months beforehand, following the appointment of the current headteacher. The barriers to raising achievement were quickly identified and these reflected the areas for improvement identified in the report. Senior leaders have high expectations of both staff and pupils and are tackling issues concerning teaching and learning in a determined fashion. Most importantly they are taking staff with them and a strong sense of teamwork is emerging that is evident in common practices and policies being deployed in all classrooms. The capacity of the leadership team to secure improvement is much stronger than at the time of the previous inspection.

This is a school that is rapidly improving and action taken since the inspection is indicative of how quickly this school is moving forward. Mental and oral mathematics is now taught methodically throughout the school, pupils' presentation of their work has significantly improved, planning systems have been reviewed so that they now demonstrate how teachers are meeting pupils' different needs particularly in wiring and daily spelling and phonic sessions have been introduced in Years 3 and 4. All initiatives designed to bring about improvement are well planned and backed up by professional development that ensures that teachers and teaching assistants have the skills and knowledge required to take pupils' learning forward.

The governing body recognises that there is work to be done if the school is to become securely good and are working closely with the headteacher in order to make the necessary changes. However, not enough governors are sufficiently involved in regularly checking the work of senior leaders as they seek to improve teaching and learning. It is essential that the governing body keep up with the pace of change set by the headteacher and carefully monitor and evaluate the impact that initiatives are having on pupils' performance.

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 provided effective support to the school. The Education Development Adviser has given good support to the headteacher during a period of staff instability. The literacy and numeracy consultants have provided training sessions for teachers and teaching assistants on areas associated with the school improvement plan. The 'Ripon and Rural Learning Partnership Network' has proved effective in providing training for staff at all levels.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for North Yorkshire and as below.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Keeler

**Her Majesty's Inspector**