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18 October 2013

Emma Vincent  
Headteacher  
Lakenheath Community Primary School  
Mill Road  
Lakenheath  
Suffolk  
IP27 9DU

Dear Mrs Vincent

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lakenheath Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 17 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:

- Ensure that lessons are pitched high enough to challenge all those present so that they attain levels higher than expected.
- Ensure that governors' records of meetings make very clear that the challenges they make are recorded with sufficient precision so that if targets are set, progress towards them can be easily monitored.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and representatives of the governing body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement and action plans were evaluated. Eight classes were visited jointly with you, in order to

evaluate the effectiveness of learning. Particular attention was paid to the accuracy of the schools' monitoring of pupils' progress.

## **Main findings**

Since the last inspection, provisional results for Key Stage 1 assessments for 2013 have been published. These show a marked improvement in the standards reached by pupils in all subjects. In previous years these standards have been close to national average. However in 2013, on average, pupils were around one half term ahead of this. This represents good progress given their starting points.

The Year 6 class of 2012-13 made progress that was close to national average. However the school's own assessment data, which is accurate, gives a more positive picture for the current Years 3,4,5 and 6 in which pupils progress faster than expected. Gaps between the performance of boys and girls are minimal. Those with special educational needs make slower progress than their peers but the gap is narrowing. Those pupils for whom the school receives funding through the pupil premium make better progress than other pupils.

In class, we observed lessons that are planned in detail, and in which pupils work mostly at levels expected for their age but rarely beyond them. This means that some pupils are not stretched to their full potential. Having said this however, current assessments indicate that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels is increasing. Marking of written work has improved since the last inspection. Comments are helpful with clear indications of how pupils can improve. Class time is devoted for pupils to reflect and comment on teachers' comments. We saw no disruption or poor behaviour. When given the opportunity to do so, pupils work well independently or with a partner.

Teachers and leaders regularly observe each other's teaching, and this has led to much sharing of each other's practice. In addition, teachers have observed other schools at work through partnership arrangements. The school's procedures for lesson observations are detailed and well-designed. Sometimes however they do not spot when pupils are not being challenged at a high enough level.

Your management of performance has improved since the last inspection. Job descriptions for middle leaders have now been clarified and staff made more accountable for the success of their pupils. Accurate assessment data is used well to set challenging targets for both individual pupils and groups. The school's action plans, produced following the last inspection, are detailed and accurate. You have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Targets for improvement are clear and challenging. Gaps in attainment and progress are clearly identified and steps to tackle them are clear.

Governors bring many strengths to the school. They visit regularly and give staff good support. They do challenge performance, often asking perceptive questions in

meetings. However these are not recorded in a way that allows subsequent checking whether progress has been made. Targets to improve performance are rarely set.

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 through a school improvement partner and the funding of additional Key Stage 2 support, especially for reading. The authority has also enabled the school to make links with schools in Hackney as part of their 'Raising the Bar' initiative. The school has also made collaborative links with nearby schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Seath  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**