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15 November 2013

Mrs Susan Boor  
Headteacher  
Holbeach Primary School  
Boston Road  
Holbeach  
Lincolnshire  
PE12 7LZ

Dear Mrs Boor

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Holbeach Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 14 November 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 September 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:

- ratify and implement the policy for governor monitoring to enable the governing body to collect accurate first-hand evidence about the school's performance
- sharpen your school development plan by including milestones relating to the progress and attainment of groups of pupils, so that governors can evaluate the impact of the school's actions more precisely.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, a group of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated your plans for improvement. I considered documentation relating to the monitoring of teaching. I reviewed your most recent data on pupils' progress and attainment. We conducted a

tour of the school. I looked at a sample of pupils' work and considered the quality of their learning in a range of subjects.

## **Context**

Since the section 5 inspection, four new governors have been appointed.

## **Main findings**

You have refined your approach to managing the performance of teachers by providing them with clear targets for improvement. Consequently, teachers are left in no doubt regarding what you expect to see in their practice. You have worked closely with senior leaders in order to check more frequently the rate of improvement in teaching. You have drawn together evidence from visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and information from teachers' assessments of pupils' progress, in order to provide teachers with regular feedback about strengths in their teaching, as well as precise recommendations of how to improve even further. Teachers are more sharply focused upon making sure that work is more closely matched to the needs of pupils with different abilities. Pupils say that they are more involved in their learning because teachers are sharing learning objectives with them. As a result, pupils know what they have to achieve by the end of the lesson and have more opportunities in which to assess their own learning. Where pupils are unclear about their work, they say that they are being given additional support. Hence, the improvement in the quality of teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning.

The governing body has responded quickly to the external review of governance by appointing additional members. This has ensured that the governing body is representative of the school's community and is better placed to be more objective in holding the school's leaders to account. Governors have developed their own action plan and have undertaken a skills audit in order to align new governors to areas of responsibility. The policy for visits to the school is currently being reviewed. Consequently, governors are not fully involved in gathering first-hand information which will help them to make a judgement about any improvement. In addition, the lack of milestones in your school development plan makes it difficult for governors to check that your actions are having a positive impact on pupils' achievements throughout the year.

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 deployed teaching and learning consultants to advise staff on improving their practice. This has been effective in developing teachers' skills in

assessing pupils' learning more accurately and providing work which meets the needs of pupils of different abilities.

The local authority advisor has helped senior leaders to improve their skills in evaluating the quality of teaching by honing their skills in undertaking scrutiny of pupils' work. This has helped senior leaders to provide more detailed feedback to staff on how to improve their practice, particularly in the teaching of writing and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

David Carter  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**