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8 November 2013

Mr Stephen Foot  
Headteacher  
Minet Junior School  
Avondale Drive  
Hayes  
Middlesex  
UB3 3NR

Dear Mr Foot

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Minet Junior School**

Following my visit with Russell Bennett HMI to your school on 8 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:

- sharpen the action plans so that they include more challenging expectations for the progress of groups of pupils and milestones against which leaders can be held to account
- evaluate the quality of teaching more rigorously by drawing upon a wider range of evidence such as that gained from looking at pupils' work, talking to pupils about their work, assessment information and observations of teaching.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the acting headteacher, other senior leaders, a number of pupils, members of the governing body and a telephone call was made to a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken

since the last inspection. The school action plans were evaluated. Minutes of governing body meetings and senior leadership meetings, achievement data, a sample of pupils' books and some safeguarding records scrutinised. The inspector joined the headteacher and the acting headteacher to visit seven classes.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection a new parent governor has been appointed.

## **Main findings**

You, other senior leaders and the governing body have responded very positively to the findings of the recent inspection. You have sought support from the local authority in drawing up an action plan to focus your work. The plan identifies some of the actions that you will take to bring about improvements. It now needs to be sharpened to include more frequent measurable steps which will enable you and members of the governing body to hold each other more closely to account.

You and your senior leaders have improved the effectiveness with which teachers' planning meets the needs of pupils with different abilities. You have made clear your expectations about how lessons should be planned and have ensured that teachers with additional leadership responsibilities have the time to check that these are being followed. Pupils have responded well to these changes and in most classes now enjoy a greater level of challenge in their learning. This does not happen in all classes and you must now ensure that it is more consistent.

Pupils show very good attitudes to their learning. In most lessons I visited, they were actively engaged with their work because teachers did not spend too long talking and allowed pupils the time to work on their own or with others. Staff training and the opportunity to observe good teaching within the school have been used to improve mediocre teaching. You have engaged well with the local community so that you can now provide pupils with more frequent opportunities to read to an adult. Pupils enjoy these sessions and told me that they like having reading targets to aspire to.

Teachers are marking pupils' work more frequently and effectively. Training has ensured that teachers understand the value of providing pupils with comments about their work and what they need to do in order to improve it. Pupils respond to teachers' marking using the newly introduced 'green pen' strategy. This is leading to more rapid progress, because pupils are clearer about where they need to improve. For instance, the books in a Year 6 mathematics class show that when the teacher marks work, he sets additional challenges and extension activities. These enable him to further assess pupils' understanding of what he has taught. Pupils respond thoughtfully and in detail to his comments, establishing a dialogue with the teacher about their learning.

Middle leaders are starting to improve the quality of teaching. Their skills at evaluating teaching have improved as a result of carrying out paired observations with you and other senior leaders. They have gained confidence in providing challenge where teaching and learning are not good enough. They have created personalised action plans to identify exactly what needs to be improved and the support that will be given to ensure that the changes happen quickly. They make good use of their observations to identify professional development opportunities within the school. They are not yet sharing and using the best practice within the school.

You have devised a systematic program for observing teaching to evaluate how well pupils are learning. Leaders' judgements about the quality of teaching are not accurate enough because you do not draw upon the full range of evidence available to you, such as information from looking at pupils' work, talking to pupils about their learning and assessment data. This is giving governors an over-generous view about how well the school is doing.

The governing body is providing an increasing level of challenge to you. The local authority has trained governors to better interpret and understand information about how well pupils are doing. As yet governors have not looked closely enough at the progress being made by all groups of pupils within the school. The action plan is not sufficiently sharp to enable governors to ask more probing questions about the progress made by groups of pupils within subjects and in different year groups.

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 limited amount of support provided by the local authority is effective. Links have been forged with a local outstanding primary school and a Local Leader of Education has started to work with teachers in the school who have additional leadership responsibilities. This has improved the rigour with which the quality of teaching is being scrutinised. Consequently, there is a much sharper focus on ensuring that teachers provide work which is challenging for all pupils. It is also ensuring that weaker teaching is being rapidly tackled and improved.

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

Yours sincerely

Adam Higgins  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**