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Mrs Clare Peat  
Headteacher  
Castle View Primary School  
School Road  
Matlock  
DE4 3DS

Dear Mrs Peat

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Castle View Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 22 November 2013 with Her Majesty's Inspector Joanne Harvey, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in July 2013.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, three senior leaders and two representatives of the local authority. Inspectors made short visits to each classroom and spoke informally to pupils. School documentation on the progress pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics was scrutinised. The local authority's statement of action, the school's improvement plan and other school documentation were also evaluated.

### **Context**

Since the last section 5 inspection, a number of internal leadership appointments have been made. Two teachers have been appointed as upper and lower school leaders and a pastoral manager now has oversight of behaviour, safeguarding and family liaison. One member of the teaching staff is absent from the school on

sickness leave. The school's hall and library are unusable following weather damage and the discovery of structural weaknesses. This matter is in the hands of the local authority's premises department.

### **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

The headteacher is driving school improvement with urgency. She has a clear picture of the actions required and is taking the necessary steps to improve the quality of teaching and to strengthen leadership across the school. Links with other primary schools have been established and are being used to build professional development opportunities for all staff. For example, the lower school leader and a teaching assistant have visited five schools in order to compare the strengths and weaknesses of their provision against that of other practitioners. These links have had an immediate impact on improving children's ability to learn independently. Also, a common system for assessing children's progress has been introduced across the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is too soon to evaluate its effectiveness. In the upper school, similar external partnerships have resulted in teachers developing a common approach to planning lessons. This system, called 'steps to success', is helping to ensure that pupils of different abilities make a good start to learning in lessons by immediately selecting a task that is appropriately challenging.

The headteacher regularly checks the quality of teaching. She oversees the way teachers plan their lessons and models effective methods of delivering lessons alongside staff. She has a clear view of teaching quality and sets appropriate targets whilst providing suitable support for the development of individual teachers. Targets for the progress pupils are expected to make are more challenging, and this has helped to increase teachers' expectations of what all pupils can achieve. The headteacher has ensured that all staff now have an accurate understanding of the progress pupils are making.

The headteacher has established a new leadership team whose members have clear areas of responsibility. However, they do not yet have the skills or experience they need to be effective in their new strategic roles. Appropriate plans have been put in place to provide them with the support and training that they need to help them to be effective. School development planning takes account of the necessary actions and timescales needed to build sustained improvement. However, it is not yet clear how senior leaders will be involved in leading these improvements. Improvement plans do not have sufficient milestones identified, by which school leaders can check on the plans' success, or which could help members of the governing body to hold school leaders to account for the effectiveness of their work.

The local authority statement of action identifies appropriate types of support and actions to improve the quality of teaching and to develop the expertise of senior leaders and governors. Clear arrangements are in place to regularly monitor the progress the school is making and to review any additional support that may be needed.

Members of the governing body are highly committed to the school and to supporting senior leaders to bring about rapid improvement. They are asking leaders more challenging questions because the quality of the information they receive from the headteacher is more precise. They have a good understanding of what needs to be done to make the necessary improvements. They have responded well to opportunities for training and have started the process of reviewing the governing body's work with a national leader of governance. They have appropriately restructured so that there is a committee that is tightly focussed on school improvement. Individual governors have been appointed to have oversight of pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Derbyshire local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Philippa Darley  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**