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10 December 2013

Phil Sharrock  
Kate's Hill Community Primary School  
Peel Street  
Dudley  
DY2 7HP

Dear Mr Sharrock

### **Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Kate's Hill Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 9 December 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and findings of the inspection. 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in February 2013. The monitoring inspection report is available within your provider room on the portal.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Barkway  
**Additional Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2013**

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good by ensuring that:
  - teachers always set work at the right level of difficulty for different groups of pupils
  - pupils are not expected to spend too long listening to teachers
  - the marking policy is applied consistently so that all pupils understand how to improve their work and have time to respond to teachers' comments
  - pupils' behaviour is consistently managed by all teachers in accordance with the agreed school policy.
  
- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
  - activities in lessons concentrate on improving pupils' basic number skills, spelling, punctuation and grammar
  - pupils have opportunity to practise and apply writing and mathematical skills in all subjects
  - teachers encourage pupils to work by themselves and complete tasks without always waiting for the teacher to help them
  - teachers give pupils clear models, setting out steps to follow when completing mathematical calculations, as well as examples of good-quality writing, so that pupils can refer to them when completing their own work.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
  - fully implementing the current plans designed to accelerate pupils' progress
  - making sure that the new systems for checking the quality of teaching are rigorously implemented
  - extending the role of the governing body in holding leaders to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress
  - ensuring that all middle leaders are fully involved in checking school improvements and tracking how well pupils are doing.

## **Serious weaknesses: monitoring of Kate's Hill Community Primary School**

### **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 9 December 2013**

#### **Evidence**

The inspection focused on progress made with the areas for improvement identified at the previous section 5 inspection.

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, members of the middle leadership team, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. The inspector visited seven parts of lessons, all of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. She reviewed school documentation, including the school's own monitoring records of the quality of teaching and the improvement plan, and she also looked carefully at the school's central record of checks on staff. In addition, the inspector scrutinised the local authority's revised statement of action.

#### **Context**

Since the last monitoring visit, permanent appointments of phase leaders and numeracy and literacy coordinators have strengthened the middle leadership team and a new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed. In addition, a newly qualified teacher joined the school in September 2013. There are two temporary teachers covering a long-term sickness and a teaching vacancy. There are no other significant changes.

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

Leaders and managers have an accurate understanding of the progress the school is making, as well as areas that require further development. They use outcomes of monitoring and evaluation activities well to identify next steps, and appropriate action is being taken to secure further improvements. As a result, although the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good, it is improving and a much greater proportion is now good or better. The end-of-key stage assessments in 2013 show significant improvements from previous years, particularly in the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels and the progress of pupils in Key Stage 2. Almost all attainment measures are now broadly average, and pupils in Key Stage 2 made good progress when compared with national averages. This positive picture is also reflected in school data showing the progress made by pupils currently in the school.

The four members of the middle leadership team take responsibility for each key stage, English, mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although they are new to the role, they are fully involved in reviewing the curriculum, monitoring the quality of teaching and tracking pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.

They have identified next steps for development in their phase or subject, and have produced well-thought out action plans which link well with the overall school development plan.

Governors have a greater awareness of their roles and responsibilities. They have received training, including mentoring from an experienced governor for the newly appointed Chair of the Governing Body. Governance has also been strengthened by the appointment of a very experienced local authority governor and two newly elected governors. Every governor is linked with a particular year group and is responsible for tracking one child's progress through the year. Through this approach, they are far more knowledgeable about what is working and what the next steps for improvement should be. As a result, governors now provide the challenge and support that is required to hold senior and middle leaders to account.

### **Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- Senior leaders have taken robust action to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- There are clear expectations, understood by all teachers, about what should be included in planning and lessons. As a result, there is greater consistency in identifying clear success criteria for learning, and providing appropriate activities that meet the needs of the pupils.
- Activities in lessons provide better opportunities for pupils to improve their basic skills of number, spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- A marking policy is providing greater consistency in helping pupils to understand how to improve their work.
- Better communication with parents is developing confidence in the school and enabling parents to understand how they can help and support their children.
- The collaboration with four neighbouring schools is providing good opportunities for training and support.

### **Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- Although the school carefully tracks pupils' progress, the data are not presented in a way that is easily accessible or could be used to demonstrate the impact of support for pupils or improvements to the quality of teaching.
- Expectations for behaviour are not consistently high, so in some lessons there is too much calling out or low-level disruption.
- In some lessons, teachers do not use ongoing assessment well enough to adjust activities when work is either too easy or too difficult or to quickly correct misunderstandings or misconceptions.

## **External support**

The local authority is providing good support for the school. Its regular joint observations with members of the senior and middle leadership team are providing an objective view of the quality of teaching and helping to identify actions for improvement. A numeracy consultant has also provided regular support, which is helping to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics, and a consultant has also provided strong support for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Following the judgement at the first monitoring inspection, the local authority has now taken appropriate steps to ensure that the statement of action is fit for purpose.