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15 January 2014

Mrs Deborah Greaves  
Simmondley Primary School  
Pennine Road  
Simmondley  
Glossop  
SK13 6NN

Dear Mrs Greaves

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

Following my visit to your school on 14 January 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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 November 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 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage can access the same quality of learning activities outside as well as inside
- refine your school improvement plan so that governors are able to check more frequently the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. We undertook a tour of the school. I looked at a range of pupils' work. I considered your most recent data on pupils' achievement.

## **Main findings**

You are drawing together information from visits to lessons, pupils' work and data on pupils' achievements in order to evaluate the quality of teaching more rigorously. Teachers are responding positively to your guidance on how to improve their practice. Teachers are using their assessments of pupils' achievements more accurately in order to plan work which is appropriately challenging for pupils of different abilities. Teachers are ensuring that pupils are more engaged in their learning. Pupils are challenged to complete their tasks within a set time and demonstrate what they learnt by the end of the lesson. These improvements are helping to bring about a greater consistency in the quality of teaching.

Leaders of English and mathematics have reviewed the plans for the teaching of the subjects in their areas of responsibility. As a result: pupils are provided with more regular opportunities in which to write longer pieces of writing across a range of subjects; pupils are heard read more often; and, on a daily basis, pupils practise their skills in mental calculations. These changes are helping pupils to make faster rates of progress in literacy and numeracy.

You have introduced more regular assessments of children's development in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is helping adults to check more closely on each child's progress and provide activities which more closely meet their needs. Limited resources and your most recent risk assessments of your outdoor provision however, show that children cannot learn outdoors as often as they should.

Your school improvement plan clearly sets out a series of actions which are to be undertaken in order to strengthen leadership and improve the quality of teaching. Although you have clear success criteria relating to pupils' achievements at the end of the academic year, the lack of specific, interim milestones at the end of each term makes it difficult for governors to be able to gauge the extent to which actions are having a positive impact on pupils' achievements.

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 advisor has a good understanding of the school. He has developed a plan of support which draws upon using the expertise of colleagues in different schools. Teachers have visited colleagues at Gamesley Community Primary School and have begun to apply what they have observed in order to enhance their own practice.

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

Yours sincerely

David Carter  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**