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Ms Sian Davies  
Malorees Infant School  
Christchurch Avenue  
London  
NW6 7PB

Dear Sian Davies

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Malorees Infant School**

Following my visit to your school on 17 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:

- Strengthen the school action plan by:
  - using pupil performance information more precisely to set challenging targets for more pupils to exceed expected rates of progress
  - widening those involved in planned checks of how well the school is doing to include governors, leaders and external consultants

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with leaders, members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. Meetings were held with a group of children and two parents. School improvement action plans, achievement data, a sample of pupils' work and records

of governing body meetings were evaluated. All classes were visited briefly in a tour of the school with the headteacher.

**Context**

Since the last inspection the Key Stage 1 phase leader is on long term sick leave.

**Main findings**

Governors, parents and staff were disappointed with the inspection outcomes. The headteacher and chair of governors facilitated a series of meetings to re-evaluate and review the school's work. Parents demonstrate strong support for the school. They are committed to work with leaders to address the areas for improvement. Children express a positive view about the extra help they receive particularly a new way of marking. The headteacher is determined to act professionally to build on the school's many strengths and tackle the inspection findings. Leaders welcomed the monitoring visit as a further opportunity to re-assess elements of the school's practice. This is a reflective response.

The school action plan has been redrafted since the inspection with a stronger focus on pupil performance. Senior leaders analysed 2013 achievement data in great detail, strategies to address underperforming groups are now clearly identified throughout the plan. These groups, for example the more able and some Arabic speaking pupils, are targeted with appropriate interventions to accelerate their progress.

The headteacher is holding the staff to account for improvement. She expects middle leaders and class teachers to take more responsibility for the analysis of attainment information and use this in lessons. Planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been updated as a result. It uses assessment information to inform key questions to be used with target children. This new emphasis has honed adults' questioning skills with children of different abilities and interests.

Performance information is not used accurately or strategically enough however in setting challenging targets for improvement. End of year pupil targets are set at fixed, yearly increases of five per cent. This measure is too blunt and does not precise assessment information about each pupil. In addition, success criteria in the plan have been determined by the percentage of pupils making expected progress. This is not ambitious enough. Governors and leaders recognise that more demanding targets are needed instead for the percentage of pupils exceeding standard expectations by the end of each year.

Since the inspection monitoring the quality of teaching is more frequent, particularly using 'learning walks' or drop-in visits to classes. This is linked to work scrutiny and assessment of lesson plans. Teachers are keen to act on detailed written feedback from lesson observations to further improve their practice. Sometimes however this feedback does not focus enough on the learning or the progress of pupils when

forming a judgement. Senior leaders have correctly identified this as an area for professional development and external moderation to ensure accuracy and rigour. Checks on the school's performance made by senior leaders and the local authority adviser provide thorough information for governors but monitoring activity needs to capture a wider range of evidence and views from different sources. Governors agree with this recommended action. They understand that there has been an overreliance on a restricted evidence base from which they have agreed self-evaluation judgements.

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 provided light touch support for the school. Elements in the annual assessment report in the summer term were overgenerous. Since the inspection the local authority has increased its support to respond to the inspection findings. Additional consultancy has assisted teachers to develop lesson planning, supported leaders to write stronger action plans and assisted governors to strengthen their strategic overview and challenge through training and monitoring activity.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Brent and as below.

Yours sincerely

Ann Debono  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**