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18 February 2014

Mrs Gillian Lindop  
Headteacher  
Dalton Junior, Infant and Nursery School  
Mayfield Avenue  
Dalton  
Huddersfield  
West Yorkshire  
HD5 9HN

Dear Mrs Lindop

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Dalton Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Kirklees**

Following my visit with Jonathan Brown HMI to your school on 17 February 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on 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 December 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 evaluation of teaching to focus more clearly on the achievement of pupils and groups of pupils in lessons
- make sure the school improvement plan includes clear and measurable targets against which success can be judged over-time.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, a group of pupils, governors and a representative of the local authority. The inspectors evaluated a range of documentation including: the school improvement plan; the tracking of pupils' progress; monitoring reports and records of lesson observations. In addition, the senior teachers took the inspectors on a tour of the school to look briefly at teaching and learning and the changes made to provision since the inspection.

## **Context**

There have been no major changes to the school's staffing and organisation since the previous inspection.

## **Main findings**

Since the inspection, senior leaders and governors have taken a range of appropriate action to lay the foundations for improvements in pupils' learning and in raising their achievement. Immediate action has been taken to:

- strengthen the planning of lessons to focus more precisely on pupils' individual needs
- ensuring that pupils are more aware of their targets and the levels they have achieved
- making sure teachers use assessment information on pupils' abilities more effectively to plan appropriate activities
- develop the roles of middle leaders
- agree key principles of effective practice in teaching and learning and develop peer coaching in the teaching of mathematics.

Systems to check on the quality of teaching and learning have been tightened. All teachers now have individual targets that directly relate to accelerating pupils' progress. There are regular reviews of how pupils are achieving and increasingly staff are held to account for the progress their pupils are making. This means that the school is better placed to plan appropriate support. However, further improvements are required in how senior leaders make judgements on the progress of pupils and groups of pupils in lessons.

The revised school improvement plan addresses the areas that need improvement and is suitably underpinned with separate action linked to improving numeracy. It gives a clear picture of proposed actions but the targets to indicate intended outcomes in the short term and longer term lack precision. Some of the actions required do not have clear milestones or success criteria against which the impact of actions can be systematically monitored and evaluated. This makes it difficult for governors to pinpoint with accuracy how well the school is improving over-time.

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**

Since the previous inspection the support from the local authority has been targeted more effectively to the school's most pressing priorities. Meetings have been held to review the school's performance and further support to challenge the school's leaders to improve the monitoring of teaching is in the pipeline. Increasingly, the quality and range of support provided to the school is helping to improve the quality of teaching and strengthen leadership.

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

Yours sincerely

Steve Isherwood

**Her Majesty's Inspector**