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Ms Sarah Kerswell
The Headteacher
Carterton Primary School
Burford Road
Carterton
Oxfordshire
OX18 3AD

Dear Ms Kerswell

Special measures monitoring inspection of Carterton Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 25 April 2014, 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 December 2013.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the acting Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, and two representatives from the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's development plan were evaluated. All classes were visited to see the school in action and safeguarding arrangements were checked.

Context

Since the inspection, in December 2013, the substantive headteacher has left the school. An experienced headteacher has been seconded for four days a week as the interim headteacher until July 2014. At the time of this inspection, the interim headteacher had been in post for 15 days. Two teachers have joined the school since the inspection, one of whom has additional responsibility for the leadership of mathematics and Key Stage 2.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Since taking up post you have quickly assessed the school's strengths and areas for development. You have provided clarity and a strong sense of purpose and commitment about what needs to be done for the school to improve. The school's development plan rightly focuses on the key priority of rapidly improving the quality of teaching. However, the plan does not go beyond July 2014 and, because of planned changes to the governing body, it is not clear who will monitor the progress the school is making.

Some valuable improvements have already taken place, including developments to how information about pupils' progress is checked and used by teachers, good quality training for teachers and more in-depth monitoring of the quality of teaching. Changes to how teachers plan their lessons mean that the focus has moved from what pupils are doing in lessons to what they will learn. As a result, there is no teaching that is inadequate and some teaching that requires improvement is beginning to improve.

The local authority has prepared a suitable statement of action. The actions are appropriate and focus on the key areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. The local authority has arranged the valuable support of a local good school. Teachers and leaders have worked alongside colleagues from this school to develop their teaching and leadership skills. Staff have demonstrated a willingness to act on advice and there is evidence of teachers trying out new ideas which have resulted in improvements in their practice.

The governing body has recently undergone a review which recommended that it be restructured in order to improve its effectiveness. Over time the recruitment and retention of governors have been a particular challenge because of the school's proximity to RAF Brize Norton and the movement of families in and out of the area. Currently there is a significant number of vacancies on the governing body. Plans are in place to form a federation of governing bodies with Carterton Community College. Governors who met with the inspector demonstrated a good understanding of the challenges facing the school and the positive impact of changes already made.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made.

- The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.
- The school's improvement plan is not 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 Oxfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Moore
Her Majesty's Inspector