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30 April 2014

Mrs Christine Stinson  
Headteacher  
Errington Primary School  
Windy Hill Lane  
Marske-By-Sea  
Redcar  
North Yorkshire  
TS11 7BL

Dear Mrs Stinson

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Errington Primary School, Redcar and Cleveland**

Following my visit to your school on 29 April 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 February 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. The school should take immediate action to:

- set more ambitious targets for the achievement of all pupils
- quickly identify gaps in teachers' skills so that a bespoke programme of professional development can be planned with support from the local authority
- review the systems for judging the quality of teaching so that they are focussed on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress over time
- ensure all middle leaders play an active part in implementing, monitoring and evaluating improvement work in their areas of responsibility
- commission an external review of governance so that the effectiveness of current approaches can be evaluated.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, senior and middle leaders, three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I reviewed the school action plan, documents relating to checks made on the quality of teaching and recent information about pupils' progress. You also accompanied me on a learning walk to each class.

## **Context**

One teacher has returned after a period of long-term absence. A parent governor has been recruited to bring the governing body to full capacity.

## **Main findings**

The outcome of the February inspection, while disappointing, has confirmed to you the urgent need for change. You rightly recognise that for too long leaders and staff have been content for pupils to make only expected progress. More ambitious targets are needed to raise everyone's expectations of how highly pupils can achieve given a better quality and consistency of teaching. Appropriate plans are in place to address these issues. But, inherent weaknesses in the systems and structures for leading improvements in teaching are preventing your planned actions from having the quick and sustainable impact they crucially need to raise achievement.

Lesson observations, learning walks and the work in pupils' books all provide evidence about the current position of teaching but none take sufficient account of pupils' progress over time. Middle leaders, in particular, recognise that the approaches taken to judge the quality of teaching do not allow the forensic depth of analysis necessary to enable precise feedback to staff. This leaves staff with too rosy a view of teaching and prevents weaknesses in practice from being identified and addressed at a sufficiently fast pace. As we discussed, evaluations need to be far more focussed on whether teaching is making a discernible enough difference to pupils' progress, including for different groups. This change of emphasis would make clearer to staff exactly where their teaching needs to have greater impact over the next 24 months.

Middle leaders have recently joined your strategic meetings to discuss the priorities for improvement, but their involvement has not progressed beyond discussion. Valuable time has been lost in allowing middle leaders to identify the underlying issues in their areas of responsibility so that training can be implemented to remedy them. Middle leaders are not actively enough involved in leading new initiatives or checking on their success. All leaders' skills need to contribute to more rapid improvement.

Governors are established and passionate about making a difference. However, over time, governance has not been as effective as it could be in moving the school's overall effectiveness to good. While governors appreciate the need for teaching and pupils' progress to improve, they have not challenged the overly-positive views of senior leaders. Governors recognise that they need to question actions and outcomes more robustly but they do not have the detailed data and evaluations to do so with rigour. An external review of governance should be commissioned before the end of the summer term to evaluate current ways of working and determine how governors can better contribute to school improvement.

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**

Concerns raised by the local authority, prior to and since the February inspection, have not been addressed with sufficient urgency. Too little support has been provided to aid you in implementing the rapid changes necessary to bring about a better quality of teaching. Consequently, your over-generous view of teaching has gone unchallenged and, over time, the drive for improvement has stalled.

Recent links have been forged with a Local Leader of Education (LLE) and the Redcar and Marske Teaching Alliance. However, this partnership remains at the very earliest stages of implementation. A review of teaching, to reveal the specific strengths and weaknesses of each member of staff, needs to be undertaken quickly to inform a programme of professional development.

You are keen to attend an Ofsted *'getting to good'* seminar in the summer term.

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

Yours sincerely

Lee Owston  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**