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Mrs Sue Goodman  
Headteacher  
Cuddington Community Primary School  
Salisbury Road  
Worcester Park  
KT4 7DD

Dear Mrs Goodman

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Cuddington Community Primary School**

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 January 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and, most particularly, 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:

- improve radically the performance of the Governing body
- sharpen some management processes, so that planned improvements in the quality of teaching, the curriculum and the progress of pupils have the greatest possible impact.

**Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you, other staff, governors and your leadership partner from the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated important documents, such as the school improvement plan and data

about pupils' academic progress. We toured the school together, visiting lessons in all classes and looking at samples of pupils' work.

## **Main findings**

The January inspection found that the Governing Body was insufficiently effective. It made some key recommendations about how to improve governors' work and advised an external review of governance. You too have been concerned for some time about the work of the governing body, as has the local authority. Governors show good intentions but are not sufficiently challenging or supportive of you.

The local authority recognised this problem and, before the January inspection, brokered the appointment of an advanced skills governor from another Surrey school as Chair. It was not possible to appoint a Chair from within the existing Governing Body. This new Chair, who is only with the school for a short time, provides experienced and staunch leadership, and has suggested and implemented some improvements. For instance, the previously unwieldy committee structure has been simplified and the minuting of meetings has been developed. As a result, there has been some, albeit very limited, improvement to governance. Key basic functions and responsibilities of an effective governing body, remain weakly established. You and he know that there is a great deal of work to do to 'reinvent' the governing body and ensure members have the necessary training and skills.

The full external review of the Governing Body, recommended in the inspection, is due to take place the day after my visit. I will read its findings with interest and expect to support and monitor the school, as appropriate, as it implements the recommendations.

You clearly have a friendly, approachable and honest leadership style which motivates and engages staff. The staff management structure is appropriate. We discussed how some internal school systems could nevertheless be sharpened and improved. For example, when the school is aiming to improve an aspect of teaching, it is important that the targets or success criteria for the work are more clearly established and that you, and senior staff, ensure they are met. You have rightly involved many staff, including the subject leaders for reading, writing and mathematics, in observing lessons and feeding back to teachers. However, it is not clear that when suggestions are made to teachers about how they can improve their work, these are always followed up with sufficient support and monitoring, to ensure they are implemented fully. Teachers generally mark pupils' work thoroughly and helpfully, though I did not see much evidence of pupils immediately following up those marking comments.

The school's new improvement plan, written with local authority support, is detailed and is beginning to drive some change for the better. We discussed how, over time,

it could include more aspects of the school's work. The school is a pleasant and stimulating learning environment. Pupils continue to behave well. It was lovely to see that the school has its own farm animals. You aim to provide a broad curriculum. I saw examples in lessons of pace, efficient and engaging teaching, which was well understood by the pupils. The teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) appears well established. Much of the pupils' writing I saw was interesting and imaginative, relevant to the task set. However, we agreed that pupils' handwriting was sometimes unsophisticated and not joined up. You have recently implemented a new set of software for recording and analysing teachers' assessments of pupils' progress. This has the potential to be very useful; it is important that teachers now use this data more precisely to guide their planning to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. I saw, nevertheless, some evidence of improved challenge for higher attaining pupils, as recommended by the inspection. You anticipate that national assessment results for 2014 will show improvement on last year. Across the school, English, particularly reading, remains stronger than mathematics.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection. I am likely to request a meeting with the full governing body after the review has taken place.

### **External support**

The local authority's recent support to the school has been very helpful and well-targeted. For example, its short-term appointment of the external chair of governors is profitable. Your key adviser, known as the leadership partner, understands the issues facing the school well, and has recorded these usefully and succinctly. You value his advice and he is ready to work with you on the journey ahead. The local authority has evaluated the progress of the school candidly.

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

Yours sincerely

Robin Hammerton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**