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9 May 2014

Mrs Nicola Leyland  
Headteacher  
Shotton Hall Primary School  
Waveney Road  
Peterlee  
County Durham  
SR8 1NX

Dear Mrs Leyland

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Shotton Hall Primary School, Durham**

Following my visit to your school on 8 May 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 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:

- Improve the recording of behaviour incidents to include a clearer chronology of actions taken as a result of the incident and the outcomes of those actions.

### **Evidence**

During the visit I held meetings with you, middle leaders, and three representatives of the governing body, a National Leader of Education from Wingate infant school who is supporting the school and an Education Development Partner from the local authority. I reviewed a range of documents including the school's post-Ofsted action plan, governing body minutes, behaviour logs and records of lesson observations carried out by leaders in the school and the local authority. I also observed two part-lessons with you.

## **Context**

Shortly after the inspection an additional teacher and two lunch time supervisors were recruited. One other teacher resigned at the end of March 2014.

## **Main findings**

Evidence from your monitoring of teaching, scrutiny of pupils books and lessons we observed together show that pupils progress is hastening across the school as a result of the urgent actions being taken following the inspection. Important actions include training for teachers and visits to see outstanding practice in other schools. Nonetheless, there are still some lessons where pupils' progress is not rapid enough because the impact of teaching on pupils learning is not good enough. Short-term support plans have been put in place alongside one to one support for each member of staff. The number of teachers on support plans has reduced to two as a result of this well-targeted and effective work.

Changes to behaviour management processes are being embedded effectively. Training has been delivered to ensure all staff apply the school's policy consistently. Pupils were seen to behave well as they moved around school, in the dining hall and in the lessons we observed together. Additional lunch time supervisors have enabled better-use of the outside spaces during break and lunchtimes and they are successfully engaging pupils in more physical activities and games. Governors and the local authority's advisers are monitoring these changes and their reports show that a positive difference to pupils' enjoyment is being made. They are also proving to be effective in reducing the number of incidents of boisterous or poor behaviour at lunchtimes. You have changed the system for recording incidents. While the system records and dates each incident, it does not identify the precise actions taken following an incident, any follow-up work required or undertaken, or the impact of any actions in helping to minimise future incidents.

Governors have developed their skills further and are vigilant in checking how well the school is improving. They have developed a specific monitoring group that meets regularly. They have increased their knowledge of what is happening in the school through more visits to monitor the school's work first-hand, including behaviour walks, talking to pupils and observing lessons. They report that alongside the detailed tracking information they receive about pupils' achievements and behaviour, they have independently observed the improvements in behaviour across the school and the better-progress pupils are making in class.

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's Education Development Partner and advisers have worked with the school successfully to support improvements in governors' skills in monitoring the school's work, the leadership of teaching, behaviour management, and developing more accurate assessments of pupils' achievements in mathematics. Middle leaders quickly accessed training and guidance from local authority staff and the National Leader of Education, in improving their leadership roles in monitoring and evaluating teaching, lesson planning and pupils' achievements. Middle leaders report they are held to account more effectively; evidencing improvements in teaching and pupils' progress as measures of the impact of this work. There is still more to do to make sure all teaching is as good as the best. The work with external agencies and yourself, to develop the skills of middle leaders so then can robustly challenge any weaknesses in their areas of responsibility needs to continue.

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

Yours sincerely

Margaret Farrow  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**