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15 May 2014

Mick Murphy  
Headteacher  
Claregate Primary School  
Chester Avenue  
Tettenhall  
Wolverhampton  
WV6 9JU

Dear Mr Murphy

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Claregate Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 15 May 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 29 January 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 and plans are not sharply focused on rapidly bringing about improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- complete the external review of governance and devise a suitable action plan for improvements in response to the report
- train governors in how to evaluate the success of the senior leaders' action using first-hand evidence of pupils' achievement
- sharpen action planning by making obvious the link between each planned action and the difference it will make to individual and /or groups of pupils' learning
- separate responsibilities in the action plan for monitoring and evaluation and set explicit deadlines for the completion of tasks
- train subject leaders for reading, writing and mathematics in how to observe and make judgements about teaching and learning based on first-hand evidence

- inject more rigour into monitoring and evaluation so that it is systematic and the evidence gathered feeds into a thorough and accurate assessment of the school's work particularly the quality of teaching
- ensure that feedback to teachers on the quality of their work focuses on the progress and attainment of different groups of pupils.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, six governors, including the Vice Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated. A range of documentation was reviewed, including information about pupils' achievement, as well as a review pupils' work.

## **Context**

There have been no significant changes since the recent inspection which judged the school to require improvement.

## **Main findings**

Actions within the school improvement plan lack precision and focus. The plan does not indicate sharply enough how teaching will be improved and how pupils will be helped to make faster progress. It does not specify the detailed actions that will be taken to help improve pupils' learning. Neither does it state who will evaluate the impact of the actions in the plan.

The actions that have been taken since the inspection are not helping pupils, particularly the most able and those known to be eligible for free school meals, to make faster progress. This is because procedures for checking the quality of teaching do not take into account the learning and progress of all groups. Written records from lesson observations and checks on work in pupils' workbooks lack detail and teachers do not have clear enough guidance to enable them to improve.

You do not always ensure that areas for development are acted upon or that all teachers make the required changes quickly enough. For instance, although there has been an increased focus on helping pupils develop their writing and mathematical skills, these changes have not been sufficient to ensure pupils in all classes make rapid progress. Work in writing and mathematics books shows that in some classes, the work for more-able pupils is not challenging enough. On occasions, teachers do not show pupils the best way of improving their writing quickly or help pupils deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts.

Members of the governing body are keen to do all they can to help the school move quickly towards good. They meet regularly to discuss the progress of pupils and the actions that need to be taken. Governors have begun to ask suitable questions about

the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils. You provide governors with a range of information about pupils' progress. However, this does not always focus enough on the progress of different groups. This makes it difficult for governors to check if different groups of pupils, such as those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or the more able, are making good progress. A full external review of governance is overdue and this is impeding governors' abilities to provide effective support and challenge.

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 is providing a level of support that is appropriate to the school's need. It has addressed some of the weaknesses in the school's initial action plan and it has advised of further changes needed. A full review of the school's leadership systems early next week will inform the level of support required in the next school year.

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

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Wordsworth  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**