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10 June 2014

Mr Chris Reilly  
Headteacher  
Berrywood Primary School  
Maunsell Way  
Hedge End  
Southampton  
SO30 2TL

Dear Mr Reilly

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

Following my visit to your school on 6 June 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 taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- strengthen the action plan by reviewing the intended outcomes to make sure that they are specific and measurable; and ensure it stays on track by mapping activities over time, being clear what resources are needed and who will keep a check that actions happen on time
- implement systems to evaluate the quality of teaching over time

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you and other senior leaders, middle leaders, the Chair of Governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. We walked around school together to see classes at work. I evaluated the action plan and looked at other key documents.

## **Context**

The deputy headteacher, who has been on secondment for much of this school year, leaves the school in July to take up a headship. You have recently appointed a replacement. He is currently working in the school one day per week coaching staff and will join full time in September. Two other senior leaders have returned to the school this term after a sabbatical and maternity leave respectively. Several teachers have either left since the inspection or will do so at the end of this term. You are in the process of finalising staffing for September.

## **Main findings**

There is a clear commitment and sense of urgency from you, your senior leaders and governors to improving the quality education for pupils at the school. You identified the improvements needed some time before the inspection and had already started to take action. The revised action plan is appropriately focused on improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and leadership and management. It takes account of all the points for improvement identified during the inspection. The plan sets out in logical steps the actions that will be taken and is complemented by detailed actions plans for English and mathematics. It is clear who is responsible for taking action and when, and what the intended outcomes are. However, some are not quantifiable and so will be difficult to measure. It would be helpful to be more specific about the progress different groups of pupils will make and the proportions that will make better than expected progress. We discussed the need to make sure that it is clear who will monitor implementation to avoid slippage, what milestones you expect to see along the way and who will evaluate the impact. The plan would also benefit from setting out exactly what resources are needed, time and money, to make sure it is manageable. I also suggested a planner mapping activities on a weekly basis might help you and your senior leaders ensure the improvement work stays on track and avoid overload points.

There has been concerted action to improve teaching and learning over the course of this school year. Staff meetings and training have been used to set clear expectations and improve teachers' understanding of what good teaching and learning look like. This professional development has been complemented by coaching for some staff and underpinned by the introduction of rigorous performance management systems. Evidence I saw, and discussions I had with staff, indicate that most welcome the clear direction and are rising to the challenge. Around school I observed a purposeful buzz to learning in most classes. You know it is important to evaluate the impact of teaching using data such as pupils' progress and work in their books as well as observing lessons. You are in the process of establishing a system for bringing this information together to evaluate teaching over time and track improvements.

You took prompt action after the inspection so as not to lose momentum. Staff are now using a standard planning format to prompt them to include the 'non-

negotiables' you expect to see in every lesson. You decided to move to whole class teaching of mathematics instead of sets from the beginning of this term rather than wait. You are clear about the rationale for this and have communicated this clearly to staff and parents. I saw how senior leaders are keeping a careful check on how effectively this is being implemented, particularly challenge for the more-able pupils.

Leadership capacity has increased with key senior leaders returning to the school and changes to middle leaders' roles. The special needs coordinator has taken the lead in improving the regular meetings held with staff to discuss the progress all pupils are making. As a result, staff are taking more responsibility for identifying those pupils who are not making enough progress and strategies to support them. Pupils with gaps in their mathematical learning are getting additional support, where in the past interventions have been focused on literacy. The mathematics leader is leading on improving mathematics teaching with training and support for staff. In the mathematics lessons I visited there were early signs of impact. I saw pupils tackling problem-solving and challenge activities, and 'working walls' to support their learning. Year team leaders are expected to focus on learning with their teams. Their monitoring of planning is helping to identify strengths in teaching and areas where staff need further support. You make good use of partnership working with other primary schools in the area and links with the local teaching school.

Governors acknowledge they did not have a clear picture of the school in the past. They are confident they are getting accurate information now and visit school more regularly to see for themselves how improvement work is progressing. Minutes of meetings show a good level of debate and challenge about the quality of education, although governors role in evaluating the action plan is not defined clearly enough.

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 increased its level of support once it became apparent that the school was not good. Officers worked with you to identify exactly what the issues were and as a result support since has been appropriately focused. The school will continue to get a medium level support package for the next two terms. Reviews of progress will determine support beyond that.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire and as below.

Yours sincerely

Alison Bradley  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**