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18 June 2014

Mrs Mykela Horton  
Headteacher  
St Edmund's CofE (C) Primary School  
Church Hill Avenue  
Mansfield Woodhouse  
Mansfield  
NG19 9JU

Dear Mrs Horton

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Edmund's CofE (C) Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 17 June 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 March 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.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, the local leader of education providing support to the school, and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the diocese to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I undertook a tour of the school, visiting all classrooms and holding discussions with pupils. I evaluated the school action plan and looked at the partnership support plan and a report about the progress made so far with the support for the school.

## Context

A significant proportion of the teaching staff, including the headteacher, will leave the school at the end of term.

## Main findings

Essential work has begun and a range of appropriate actions has been taken to begin tackling the areas for improvement from the inspection. The governing body is well informed about developments at the school and, as a result of changes to its ways of working and training for its members, increasingly influential in challenging the senior leaders to make improvements. Your action plans is broadly fit for purpose.

You have put in place a set of leadership monitoring activities. You have also clarified the role and involvement of subject leaders. The subject leaders have been given opportunities to work alongside their opposite numbers at your partner school. As a result, they have been able to bring new ways of working to St Edmund's.

Similarly, all members of the teaching staff have visited your partner school to view and discuss good practice. That has initiated a greater level of professional discussion, more openness and an exchange of ideas at St Edmunds, leading in turn to changes in teaching. For example, the teachers have been involved in activities that have improved their ability to assess the pupils' writing accurately. Consequently, they are beginning to set more-challenging tasks for the pupils.

You have made important changes to the way that the curriculum is planned. The changes have already had a positive effect on the pupils, who are able to focus more on the work they are doing and are more motivated, as a result. The pupils told me how the new approach is extending their learning.

Other useful initiatives include the introduction of 'challenge books' in the Foundation Stage. The books are motivating the children and helping them to understand better what they are learning. The children talked animatedly with me about the books and the challenges that they were working on.

You are at the early stages of seeing the impact of those actions. I saw evidence still of differing approaches to marking the pupils' work and the opportunities they are given to respond, or to correct errors. It was apparent also that the work they are given is still, sometimes, easy for them.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection. I have recommended that a further visit takes place to monitor the progress of the school, with particular reference to improvements in leadership and management.

## **External support**

Effective work by the local authority and the diocese has resulted in a broad-based package of support for the school. The support provided has been a very significant factor in the progress made so far at St Edmund's, providing impetus, direction and access to practical examples of good practice. The staff are responding well to the development opportunities provided through the partnership with another, outstanding primary school and this is leading to improvements at St Edmund's.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Nottinghamshire and the Director of Education for the Nottingham and Southwell diocese.

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**