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17 June 2014

Miss Yasmin Dhillon  
Headteacher  
Maidenhall Primary School  
Newark Road  
Luton  
LU4 8LD

Dear Miss Dhillon

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

Following my visit to your school on 16 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 third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection, but governors are not. The school should take further action to:

- strengthen governance as a matter of urgency so that governors make an effective contribution to school improvement

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, two members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. Minutes from governor meetings were scrutinised. I visited a number of classes in the school to observe the teaching and learning.

## **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection a number of teachers have left the school and a new senior leadership team has been appointed. The local authority issued the governing body with a warning notice this year.

## **Main findings**

Governance has proved inadequate since the last inspection. Attendance at meetings is low and lines of communication with the senior leaders are weak. In part this was the fault of the inexperienced headteacher, but she has learned from her mistakes and is now a more effective communicator. Governors do not have a good enough understanding of what constitutes the role of the governing body. Consequently, they do not spend their time concentrating on the strategic development of the school, but get involved with operational matters that are not their responsibility. The local authority has worked to engage the governing body in training and with support at meetings. To date, this work has had too little impact which is why the local authority issued the warning notice and why the conclusions from the external review of governance were highly critical of the work of the governing body.

Despite this, the headteacher, with the support of the new senior leadership team are driving improvements to teaching and achievement which are now much closer to good. They demonstrate that they have much increased capacity for further improvement. Standards this year in reading, writing and mathematics are rising because the proportion making the expected progress is favourable. The proportion that exceeds the expected progress is rising and is now close to average. Teachers benefit from structured support and training to strengthen their teaching. Consequently, pupils in most classes now receive teaching that has many good features.

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 headteacher has been effectively supported both by the local authority and the headteacher from a local high performing school. This has enabled her to develop her leadership and communication skills and strengthen the quality of education in the school.

Governors have been offered a range of training and support. Unfortunately, it has yet to have an impact on strengthening the governance of the school.

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

Yours sincerely

**Tim Bristow**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**