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7 October 2014

Ms Beverley Hartland Smith  
Mead Vale Community Primary School  
Kestrel Drive  
Worle  
Weston-super-Mare  
BS22 8RQ

Dear Ms Hartland Smith

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Mead Vale Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 7 October 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 May 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:

- clarify which leaders and governors are responsible for evaluating the impact of each action taken to raise achievement
- insist that all teachers consistently follow the school's marking policy.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher, the English subject leader and the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone. I undertook a focused tour of the school, looked at a range of English and mathematics books and teachers' planning. I held discussions

informally with pupils and staff. I evaluated the school improvement plan. I looked at the single central record to ensure appropriate checks have been made for all new staff.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, you have reorganised the senior leadership team. The deputy headteacher now has a non-teaching role. He is supporting middle leaders in improving standards in their subjects. You have reorganised the class structure. There are now two classes in each year group. The inclusion manager took up her post in September. The Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body took up their roles in September. They are both long-serving governors.

## **Main findings**

You are driving forward the changes needed to improve the school with determination and conviction. You have raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. Leaders understand their role in improving the school quickly. All staff are working as a team to achieve this goal quickly. The school's action plan focuses sharply on the key areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. However, there is a lack of clarity about who will check these actions are making a difference.

You have established a new senior leadership team. Leaders are tackling weaknesses in teaching in a concerted way by giving staff honest feedback. They check the quality of work in pupils' books and how well pupils are learning in lessons. As result, teaching is improving and underperformance is being tackled. Pupils are now making faster progress.

Leaders are rightly focusing on ensuring teachers accurately check pupils' achievement and progress. They are supporting teachers in using this information to set work which challenges pupils of all abilities. Leaders also meet with class teachers each half term to hold them to account for pupils' progress. You are putting targeted support in place for any pupils who are falling behind and their progress is carefully checked. As a result, teaching is improving, and standards are rising. In 2014, standards improved from the previous year. A greater proportion reached the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Your vision of establishing a whole school culture of 'aiming high' is taking hold.

Behaviour in lessons has improved. Teachers know the needs of their pupils extremely well and use this to set appropriately challenging work. Teaching assistants are providing good support in the classes. For example, they teach pupils requiring support to manage their behaviour, in the classroom. As a result, pupils are keen to learn with their classmates and enjoy achieving in their lessons. The school's records show incidents of poor behaviour have significantly reduced since the previous inspection.

The quality of teachers' marking remains too variable. This is particularly the case where teachers are not applying the marking policy consistently. In some classes, teachers give pupils precise next steps and allow them time to respond. However, where this is less effective, marking is not helping pupils move forward in their learning.

Governors are increasingly involved and aware of the improvements needed. The new Chair and vice-chair have wasted no time in working with you to plan the school's next steps for improvement. They have established clear roles and responsibilities for governors. They have made a positive start in checking for themselves that actions taken to improve the school's performance, are making a difference. However, it is not always clear which governor will check the agreed actions. Governors have received training and now have a greater understanding of assessment information. They are using this to challenge you and your leaders. For example, they are checking that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and eligible for additional government funding, make good progress. This is having a positive impact on raising standards for all pupils.

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 strong support. Following the inspection, they organised a review of governance. Governors have responded quickly to the suggested recommendations. This is having a positive impact on improving the effectiveness of the governing body. The local authority checks frequently that actions taken are improving the school. In addition, they have arranged training for your teachers. This is supporting you in improving teaching quickly.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Leahy  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**