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9 October 2014

Mr James Procter  
Headteacher  
Hothfield Junior School  
Hothfield Street  
Silsden  
Keighley  
West Yorkshire  
BD20 0BB

Dear Mr Procter

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hothfield Junior School, Bradford**

Following my visit to your school on 8 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 July 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:

- ensure that action plans cover all the elements that require improvement, extend beyond this term and include challenging targets aimed at improving pupils' achievement by the end of this academic year.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. A learning walk was conducted

with the headteacher to look at work in pupils' writing and mathematics books. The school development plan and action plans were evaluated.

## **Main findings**

The development plan sets the vision for the school's improvement in the context of the new National Curriculum which is seen as a vehicle for raising expectations and achievement. Action plans to deliver this vision have been drawn up but do not cover all areas requiring improvement or set clear, rigorous targets against which leaders, including the governing body, can evaluate progress. Nonetheless, work towards the vision is underway.

New systems for assessing the new curriculum requirements have been introduced for mathematics and spelling. More frequent reviews of the work in pupils' books have been established to complement these and provide more regular evidence about learning. However, the information gathered needs to be used to identify where and how teaching can be improved from requiring improvement to good and from good to outstanding.

The drive to improve marking and feedback to pupils is having a positive impact, particularly with regard to pupils' writing. Marking is detailed and focuses on improvements to writing skills. Pupils are rising to the challenges set by teachers in responses which are flagged as 'improvement from feedback'. In mathematics pupils are beginning to indicate the level of their confidence about what they are learning through traffic lights. However, the next step of identifying what they find difficult is proving quite a challenge.

Developments in a number of areas have begun including: the introduction of a more straightforward calculation policy; a sharper focus on ensuring that Year 3 pupils form letters correctly; a reorganisation of teaching in Year 5 classes to provide more consistency in delivering the core subjects; the introduction of booster groups targeting disadvantaged pupils much earlier in the academic year; ensuring that Year 6 pupils capable of gaining the highest level in the national tests are entered for this.

The governing body is keen that the review of its work is thorough and is commissioning with this in view. Governors have established a committee specifically to track progress on the issues identified by the recent inspection.

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 has identified this school as a high priority. Consequently, considerable support has been commissioned for English, mathematics, special

educational needs and leadership and the headteacher and linked officer are working together to plan this. A system of regular meetings at which senior local authority officers hold the school's leaders to account for progress on the improvements required have begun. The school belongs to a partnership of local schools, the Two Valleys Learning Collaborative, and draws on expertise in some areas such as the moderation of assessments in writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Austin  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**