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6 November 2014

Rosalind Welch  
Headteacher  
Bocking Church Street Primary School  
Church Street  
Bocking  
Braintree  
CM7 5LA

Dear Mrs Welch

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bocking Church Street Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 5 November 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 its action plan has sufficient detail and that it describes more clearly what you are aiming to achieve, what you will do to achieve your aims and when you expect to achieve them
- improve its action plan by adding clear deadlines, milestones and monitoring activity so that school leaders and governors can ensure that momentum is maintained and school improvement remains on track
- ensure that the governing body's monitoring role is clear.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and your deputy, a governor and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated and you took me on a tour of the school. I checked the school's single central register and we discussed the results of this year's Key Stage 2 national tests and other assessment information.

## **Context**

A new deputy headteacher, an experienced teacher and two newly-qualified teachers joined the school in September. Three teaching assistants and three governors have also joined the school. The school has two classes in Reception for the first time and a portable classroom has been installed to accommodate this increase. The school's kitchen is being replaced and work is almost complete.

## **Main findings**

Assessment results at the end of the 2013/14 academic year show a mixed picture. The proportion of pupils who achieved a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage was above the national average as was the proportion who reached the expected level in the Year 1 phonics screening check. However, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 fell this year and a lower than average proportion reached the higher levels in reading and writing. Although the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level at the end of Key Stage 2 was below the national average in reading and writing, standards are rising overall. The proportion of pupils who made expected progress was above average in all areas and a higher than average number made better than expected progress in reading and writing.

The school's action plan links directly to the improvement points from the last full inspection. It includes some suitable targets and it gives an indication of the starting position for each area. Some deadlines and dates are included in the plan and it is clear how some actions will be monitored.

However, the action plan is too superficial and lacks essential detail. There is no clear sense of what you are aspiring to achieve, or the specific actions that will enable this. The plan needs to include specific milestones for actions and to show clearly how you intend to improve the school to get to 'good' at your next inspection. You need to ensure that the plan has clear dates and deadlines and appropriate monitoring activities. The governing body is aware of the school's action plan but needs to have a clearer role in monitoring it.

You have introduced a new marking and feedback policy and I saw evidence in pupils' books that this is being implemented. You do not view this work as complete

and have plans in place to review practice further and to 'fine tune' your systems. It is too soon to measure the impact of this change.

A range of other actions have taken place to improve teaching. The school has a greater focus on targeting pupils who are making slow progress and a range of interventions are in place. You provided me with documents that show that procedures for monitoring the progress pupils make have been tightened and the impact of interventions is being monitored more closely. A range of continuing professional development activities have been undertaken by staff, specifically for improving the teaching of mathematics. You have introduced 'the Big Skill', focusing on the improving pupils' consistent application of key skills such as using punctuation, and this is becoming embedded. All of these actions are too recent to yet have had a measurable impact on improving standards.

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 provides good support and reviews the school's performance regularly. It commissioned the school's involvement with a programme intended to provide sustained support over the next three years. The programme focuses on improving leadership, pedagogy and assessment for learning. You are very positive about the programme and anticipate that it will have a significant impact on moving the school forward. The local authority will monitor the impact of the programme and will continue to review the school's progress regularly. You are also part of the local primary learning network, providing opportunities to work collaboratively on school improvement with other local schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Wendy Varney  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy