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12 December 2014

Anthony Welch  
Headteacher  
Holland Park Primary School  
Holland Road  
Clacton-on-Sea  
CO15 6NG

Dear Mr Welch

### **Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Holland Park Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 11 December 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in January 2014. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that the school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation. It has made significant progress in addressing the areas for improvement from the last inspection. I recommend that the next inspection of the school is a full section 5 inspection.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Essex.

Yours sincerely

Robert Lovett  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2014**

- Improve teaching in Years 3 to 6 so that pupils' progress is good, by ensuring that:
  - teachers have high expectations of what all pupils, including the more able, can achieve
  - expectations of the quality and presentation of pupils' written work are high in all subjects
  - teachers and pupils are more aware of what they must do to move to a higher level
  - marking is more effective in driving rapid improvement in pupils' performance and pupils follow the advice they are given when teachers mark their work.
  
- Raise standards and strengthen achievement, particularly in Years 3 to 6, so that more pupils learn at a faster rate by:
  - ensuring that improved teaching in lessons is supported by opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their skills through high quality written work
  - pupils have more opportunities to practise their skills in writing and mathematics through their work in other subjects.
  
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
  - ensuring that the analysis of information about how well pupils are doing, and the evaluation of the impact of teaching, is more rigorous and closely focused on the progress pupils make, leading to a more timely response when progress slows
  - setting higher expectations of what pupils can achieve, including the quality of their written work.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 11 December 2014**

### **Evidence**

The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other key members of staff. He spoke with the Chair of the Governing Body and met with a representative of the local authority. He and the headteacher observed teaching in all 14 classes. The inspector looked at the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation and data on pupils' achievement. He also looked at pupils' books and displays of their work.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection the long serving headteacher has retired. A new headteacher started in September.

### **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

The newly appointed headteacher has rapidly transformed the school into a more exciting and vibrant place for pupils to learn in. He has galvanised staff, pupils and parents and acted as a catalyst for improvement. He has maintained the school's traditional strengths and close links with the local community, and introduced a number of new initiatives. Communication with parents has been improved through the use of modern technologies to tell parents what is happening in the school. He has consulted parents about what they liked and what could be improved, and has responded promptly. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, who is now taking a more active role in leading the school. As assessment leader she has a clear understanding of pupils' progress and uses this information to target support where it is most needed.

Key subject leaders are able to speak with confidence about the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility and what can be done to improve it further. They now have more time to do their jobs properly and feel very well supported by senior leaders. The leadership of the early years provision has improved, partly because the leader is now based in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means she is able to model good practice and monitor provision more easily. The inclusion manager keeps a close eye on how well disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are doing, and acts quickly if progress slows.

The school has put in place a wide range of individualised support for pupils to improve areas of work such as reading, mathematics and handwriting. Leaders at all levels are confident and knowledgeable. They are able to articulate what they are doing to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, and describe a shared vision for improvement through 'the power of small changes'. These small

changes, when seen as a whole, are resulting in more effective teaching and accelerating progress for pupils of all abilities.

Leaders make frequent checks on the quality of teaching and provide useful coaching and feedback. This could be improved further by ensuring observations have a sharper focus on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.

Governors are committed, knowledgeable and well informed. They are able to describe recent changes in detail, and know about their impact and expected impact on pupils' achievement. The governing body significantly enhances the school's capacity to improve further.

Appropriate safeguarding checks are carried out on adults who work with children, and statutory requirements are met.

### **Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- There is a strong focus on improving pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work. This includes providing extra small group, and individual support for pupils who are finding it difficult to form and join their letters consistently well. Expectations of what is acceptable have risen. The introduction of a single book for all writing in all subjects is proving effective in ensuring these higher expectations are met.
- Pupils have more opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects such as history, and to apply their mathematical skills in science and design technology.
- Teachers' marking is more effective. When teachers ask pupils to improve their work they do so promptly. Pupils say that they value this rapid feedback and opportunity to respond quickly.

### **Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- Not all lesson observation recording sheets make reference to the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. Sometimes it is unclear exactly why a lesson is judged as it is. Even where an explicit judgment is made on pupils' progress, the link between successful teaching strategies and outcomes for pupils is not explicit enough to show cause and effect.

### **External support**

The local authority and an external consultant have provided a wide range of much valued and very effective support. Both senior and middle leaders say how useful advice and challenge from local authority advisers has been. One described them as 'full of good ideas'. Senior leaders commented on the positive impact of the excellence commissioner on strategic leadership. The governing body also speaks highly of the training and advice it has received. The school has strengthened its partnership with the local authority and responds quickly to suggestions for further

improvement. The school is also engaging more with the local community of schools to share expertise and training.