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15 January 2015

Miss Sarah Scarborough  
Headteacher  
Charnock Hall Primary School  
Carter Hall Road  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S12 3HS

Dear Miss Scarborough

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Charnock Hall Primary School, Sheffield**

Following my visit to your school on 14 January 2015, 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 October 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 senior and middle leaders continue to make the planning of improvement more systematic and the evaluation of impact more rigorous
- make sure that staff are more united in their commitment to bring about rapid improvement
- make stronger links with good or outstanding schools to improve weaker aspects of teaching, learning, leadership and management.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, senior leaders, three members of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and the lead

headteacher of the Birley Community Learning Trust to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. School improvement plans were evaluated.

## **Context**

At the end of the autumn term, one teacher went on maternity leave and another returned.

## **Main findings**

You and your senior leadership team and the Governing Body have responded positively to the findings of the recent inspection. There is a collective determination to improve teaching and the learning and progress of pupils. A few members of staff remain unhappy with the inspection judgement and are less convinced of the need for change. You recognise the need to ensure that all members of staff are committed to bringing about improvements.

The school improvement plan sets out realistic actions for tackling the areas for improvement identified in the recent inspection. Documents accurately record the actions taken so far and the impact they are beginning to have.

You have begun to sharpen the focus of action plans and the rigour with which the performance of staff is managed. You have delegated more responsibility to the deputy and assistant headteacher which has increased the capacity for supporting and challenging staff. You have introduced unannounced observations to check the quality of teaching and these observations are carried out more frequently with more direct feedback to staff. Observations and checks of pupils' work are clearly focused on the areas for improvement identified in the recent inspection report.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the organisation of activity areas has become more focussed. More formal literacy and numeracy activities have been started earlier, using extra practical resources for mathematics. Links with the neighbouring private nursery have improved. The local authority is providing additional support to develop outdoor learning. You are considering how to accelerate improvement by making links with an outstanding early years setting in a similar context.

A planned review of the management and teaching of letters and sounds is designed to secure rapid improvement in basic reading skills in Years 1 and 2.

Senior leaders report that the leaders of English and mathematics are becoming more active in tackling weaknesses in teaching and learning. Training has been provided to improve the analysis of pupil progress data in English. Additional resources for practical work in mathematics have not yet had an impact on pupil progress. You have identified the need for expert advice to identify weaknesses in mathematics more precisely.

Coaching for weaker teaching which was introduced just before the inspection has had some impact on making improvements but there is further to go.

Action has been taken to improve the learning environment by clearing out classrooms and patching and painting walls. The Birley Community Learning Trust is helping to seek funding to carry out further improvements.

Governors are keen to support and challenge senior and middle leaders to improve pupils' achievement. An external review of governance will take place shortly focused on the structures of governance; how governors challenge leaders; and forward-planning to maintain the strength of the Governing Body. Governors have reviewed the school improvement plan and met with senior and middle leaders to discuss actions and their impact. An external review of the use of pupil premium funding is planned to take place shortly.

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**

You and the deputy headteacher are relatively new to your roles. You are receiving effective support from the local authority school improvement adviser and the lead headteacher from the Birley Community Learning Trust. The local authority has made arrangements for a primary headteacher to help you improve teaching and learning. With the support of the Birley Community Learning Trust, the school has made a bid for funding to improve teaching more rapidly through a programme of coaching and mentoring, using lead practitioners from other schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell

**Her Majesty's Inspector**