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Post-inspection note of visit letter – schools requiring improvement monitoring inspection visits

26 January 2015

David Bell  
Tysoe CofE Primary School  
Saddledon Street  
Tysoe  
Warwick  
CV35 0SH

Dear Mr Bell

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Tysoe CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 23 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in September 2013. 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 section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure all teachers know what writing skills pupils of each age should display
- enable pupils to frequently practise and apply writing skills in different subjects
- ensure all teachers' marking leads to improvements in pupils work
- ensure the most able pupils are well challenged in all classes.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the executive headteacher, members of the governing body and a group of parents to discuss the impact of actions taken since the last monitoring visit. Telephone conversations were held with representatives from Warwickshire local authority and the diocese of Coventry. Informal conversations were held with teachers at lunchtime and around the school. Short visits were made to each classroom to observe pupils' learning, talk to them and look at the work in their books. The school improvement plan was evaluated and other documents examined relating to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

## **Context**

Since the previous monitoring visit, the headteacher left the school. An acting headteacher was in post for a short time. You joined the school in June 2014. Last week the school became federated with Wellesbourne CE Primary School. The headteacher of Wellesbourne has been appointed executive headteacher of both schools and you have been confirmed in the post of head of school at Tysoe. The two federated schools are governed by a single governing body. Several teachers have left the school, one teacher is currently absent on long term sick leave and three teachers have joined.

## **Main findings**

After a period of significant turbulence, there is now a shared purpose and an ambition for the school to provide well for its pupils. You have secured stable staffing and ensured the quality of teaching has improved. Your considerable efforts to improve communications have transformed the previous culture of mistrust and misunderstanding into a climate of trust and co-operation between staff, governors and parents.

Teaching has improved because you have implemented a high quality programme of training and support for teachers. This has been well supported by the effective liaison with Wellesbourne. Teachers have valued this guidance and willingly acted on advice. As a result, pupils' achievement has improved. Many pupils are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils' books show many now take pride in their learning. Books also show the impact of training for teachers on how to increase the impact of marking on improving pupils' work. Teachers now mark work frequently, sometimes giving helpful advice. Where pupils follow this guidance, their work improves. However, the quality of this process varies between classes and over time. Sometime the teacher's marking does not focus closely enough on the intended learning in the lesson. Some comments are too general. Sometimes the teacher does not give pupils sufficiently precise guidance that is based on what the pupil needs to learn next. Pupils do not

always follow up the teacher's advice and so do not always make the necessary improvement.

Pupils' books also show they do not practise writing skills by using them in other subjects very often. This means that, while pupils are building useful skills, some do not go on to become confident and competent writers because they do not routinely apply these skills as part of their learning. In some classes, teachers do not expect pupils to produce a high enough quality of writing. This is because some teachers do not sufficiently understand what pupils of a particular age should be able to do. This is particularly so for the most able pupils.

The newly formed federation governing body has a clear vision and ambition for the school. Governors welcome the opportunity to broaden the horizons of pupils at Tysoe and to give staff the chance to take on more responsibility. Governors see the benefits of federation as a two-way process. The governing body is now better informed about pupils' achievement and is building a more accurate picture of the quality of teaching as a result. Governors have a better understanding of the strategic nature of their role. For example, governors now appreciate the need for a, systematically planned programme of monitoring which leads to an overall picture of strengths and weaknesses.

Teachers with additional responsibilities now carry out their roles more effectively. For example, subject leaders are checking the quality of work in pupils' books and giving teachers advice on how to improve. Monitoring records show this advice is followed up by subject leaders and senior leaders to see if teachers have made the expected improvement.

Teachers are now held closely to account for pupils' progress. Pupil progress meetings are used to identify pupils who are falling behind and to discuss what action may need to be taken. You have identified that, while teaching has improved overall, teachers must plan more effectively to meet the needs of some pupils.

Parents recognise the significant improvement in the atmosphere of the school. They say staff are now approachable and take any concerns seriously. Parents report that day-to-day communication is now much better. They appreciate the information they are given about what their children are learning and how they can support this at home. While parents understand that the school is undergoing strategic change, they would like to have further information about what this might mean for them and their children. They say they would value closer dialogue with the governing body.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection. During this visit, it was agreed that you will send copies of your headteacher reports to the governing body

and termly achievement information to HMI. Leaders will attend termly HMI-led improvement workshops.

### **External support**

The school appreciates the insightful support from the learning improvement officer. She has verified judgements about the quality of teaching and given teachers clear feedback on what needs to improve. More recently, the greater degree of challenge has helped you demonstrate the improvement made and to set challenging targets for the year ahead. Support given by the diocese to the governing body has enabled the transition to new governance arrangements to happen smoothly.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Warwickshire local authority and the diocese of Coventry.

Yours sincerely

Sandra Hayes  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**