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20 January 2015

Mrs Vanessa Langley  
Executive Headteacher  
Gleadless Primary School  
Hollinsend Road  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S12 2EJ

Dear Mrs Langley

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

Following my visit to your school on 19 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 September 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

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 any new whole school initiatives start in the Early Years classes
- check regularly and consider if the targets set for pupils in Year 6 particularly are, while remaining ambitious, realistically achievable
- ensure that feedback to teachers, following lesson observations, makes it clear how much progress different groups of pupils make.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection I held meetings with you, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body together with other members of the senior leadership team. I also met with members of staff who monitor attendance, four phase leaders and a representative of the local authority. During these meetings we discussed the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. We toured the school to observe pupils in class and at lunchtime.

## **Context**

Since the inspection the Chair of the Governing Body has stepped down but remains a governor. The current Chair was previously chair of a sub-committee.

## **Main findings**

The determination, drive and rigour that you demonstrate was recognised in the inspection report and is reflected in the work led by other senior leaders and governors. The inspection in September 2014 identified issues that you were tackling, for example improving the quality of teaching and the progress being made by different groups of pupils. You recognise that progress in mathematics, although much improved, is not as strong as that in reading and writing. Links with other schools to ensure that more-able pupils in particular do as well as they can are proving successful, according to school data.

During our discussions, the phrase 'a lack of ambition' was used on several occasions. Staff are now aware of individual pupils' capabilities and are generally setting work that meets their needs. This needs to become fully embedded throughout the school. When observations take place, feedback to teachers must focus on the progress made, or not made, by different groups of pupils. Currently feedback, too often, describes what actions were taken by the teacher.

Your action plans are comprehensive, checked by governors and reviewed regularly. Phase leaders contribute to these plans and are given responsibility to drive forward improvements. Some targets, for example the proportion of Year 6 pupils that are expected to make more than expected progress are very high. There is a large gap between where the pupils are now and the ambitious targets set for the end of the school year. You recognise the need to review these to ensure they are realistic given pupils' starting points. A spelling programme has been introduced which currently starts in Year 1. You and your colleagues recognise that if children in Reception are ready, they should be involved.

I may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

## **External support**

Working with Arbouthorne Community Primary School particularly and other schools in the area is beneficial and enables you and your staff to be sure that judgements and supporting evidence about pupils' work are accurate. The links with a local secondary school to provide additional mathematical help for more able pupils is proving beneficial. Local authority officers check regularly to make sure that you continue to consolidate actions and that these lead to all pupils making the progress of which they are capable.

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

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

**Her Majesty's Inspector**