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4 February 2014

Mr Greg Crawford  
Headteacher  
Poole's Park Primary School  
Lennox Road  
Finsbury Park  
London  
N4 3NW

Dear Mr Crawford

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Poole's Park Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 4 February, 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.

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:

- identify in the school action plan short term measurable milestones so that progress is assessed more regularly, enabling leaders at all levels to be held fully to account for their work
- make it explicit who is monitoring progress and who is evaluating the impact of actions, and clarifying the role of governors
- improve how well teachers meet the range of ability groups, making sure that marking identifies what progress pupils have made towards the learning outcome(s).

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, senior and middle leaders, a group of teachers, the school council, a representative of the Governing Body, the Director of Schools and the Head of School Improvement to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I talked informally to pupils at lunchtime. I evaluated the school action plan and looked at teaching and learning in lessons and in pupils' books. I looked at the schools monitoring of teaching and learning and the most recent headteacher's report to the governors.

## **Context**

Since the previous full inspection, the school have appointed an acting deputy headteacher and a Year 3 teacher.

## **Main findings**

Leaders at all levels have settled into their new roles. They are focused on making sure that the quality of teaching and pupil achievement improves. You explained that you have employed the skills of the local authority improvement adviser and an external adviser to coach leaders on how to make sure their judgements for the quality of teaching are accurate. This includes observing teaching in lessons and assessing the quality of work in pupils' books. Advisers have modelled effective feedback to teachers outlining strengths and areas for improvement. I can see that leaders are putting this training into practice. They are honing their monitoring skills well. Discussions with teacher's say they value this feedback, and are using it to improve their teaching.

You know what you need to do to improve the school at a rapid rate. You have a good overview of the progress different groups of pupils make because progress is checked regularly. Several leaders are keen to sharpen their leadership skills further. Many are undertaking leadership training. They are using this experience well to improve provision further. For example, pupil data is being used to target underachieving pupils, with appropriate intervention strategies put in place to boost their progress.

You and senior leaders are providing good quality support for teachers. You have raised teacher's awareness of what good teaching looks like and provided training on what constitutes effective assessment and marking. However, the action plan does not spell out clearly enough measurable targets, and the impact of actions is not checked regularly enough. This results in inconsistencies in the quality of marking and presentation of pupils' work. Likewise, it is not clear who is responsible for monitoring and evaluating progress. This means that governors and other key stakeholders cannot hold you and other leaders fully to account for your work.

Teachers are now planning more precisely to meet the needs of all ability groups, to make sure that pupils are challenged to think and work hard. For example in the

early years and Key Stage 1 pupils are now grouped for ability in phonics and in mathematics. Teachers told me that they have quality time to work together, to plan more carefully for different ability groups. The intensive focus on making sure assessments are accurate is also supporting this. However, learning outcomes are still not pitched at the right level of difficulty. For example, more able pupils are not always expected to learn at a deeper level. Equally, marking is sometimes superficial. Too often teachers do not provide pupils with clear pointers on how well they have achieved in relation to the success criteria. Further refinements are needed to make sure that learning always proceeds at a fast pace.

From my observations, and discussions with a range of pupils, behaviour has noticeably improved. Most importantly, pupils told me that they feel safe. They say that the boisterous behaviour at lunchtime has declined. You have rightly increased adult supervision. Older pupils, chosen by the school council, are also helping those pupils who sometimes make the wrong choices about their behaviour. A revised timetable means that the school day starts with an assembly. This encourages pupils to be more punctual. You are also targeting those parents on an individual basis who find it difficult to make sure that their child attends school on time. Attendance is currently broadly average.

Governors focus on the key priorities for improvement. They have had recent training on understanding progress data, assessment and the new curriculum. They have a better understanding of how well the school performs in relation to national norms and are gathering their own evidence through focused learning walks. As a result they are better able to challenge you and other leaders on the quality and impact of your work.

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 all staff appreciate the good support from the local authority and an external consultant. This has enabled you and your leaders to make accurate judgements for the quality of teaching and pupil achievement overtime. In addition, the local authority provides challenge and advice to you, particularly at the regular Project Group meetings, which were set up to evaluate progress towards the areas identified as requiring improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Mary Hinds

**Her Majesty's Inspector**