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26 February 2015

Mrs Ruth Baldwin  
Headteacher  
Waterloo Primary School  
Crosby Road North  
Waterloo  
Sefton  
Merseyside  
L22 0LD

Dear Mrs Baldwin

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Waterloo Primary School, Sefton**

Following my visit to your school on 25 February 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 November 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:

- Develop how teachers make best use of displays and classroom environments to share good practice and allow pupils to apply their learning.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders and representatives of the Governing Body. A meeting was held with the representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The inspector, accompanied by senior leaders, visited all classes and learning bases in the school to see them at work and to talk with pupils. A selection

of pupils' books and other documents related to school improvement were examined.

## **Context**

There has been no significant change to the context of the school since the last section 5 inspection.

## **Main findings**

School leaders took immediate actions to improve the effectiveness of the school following the Section 5 inspection.

Governors immediately set up a dedicated committee of appropriately skilled governors to oversee the planning and implementation of leaders' actions to improve the school. This committee is effectively challenging leaders and holding them to account.

Leaders, supported by the governing body, rightly decided that they must immediately reduce some of the work they were undertaking in the local educational community to focus their energies on bringing about the required improvements in their own school. This has resulted in actions being implemented rapidly and checked regularly to ensure that the school is improving quickly.

Governors can easily check that the school is improving towards its next inspection because the school's action plan is well-structured and contains appropriate priorities and clear expectations. These priorities sharply focus on the key issues identified at the last school inspection and identify clearly what the expected outcomes are at times throughout the year. However, governors' evaluation of the impact actions should be improved further by sharpening the focus of their regular visits to school to check for themselves the impact in classes.

The quality of teaching is improving because senior and middle leaders have improved greatly the effectiveness of their monitoring and how it is used to identify issues in learning. Observation of teaching is now more sharply focused on the outcome of pupils rather than actions of teachers and other adults. Leaders quickly pinpoint issues within subjects, classes or groups and take rapid actions to address them.

The school's marking policy is now more consistently implemented and is resulting in pupils being given better guidance on how to improve their work. The restructuring of timetables to give pupils additional time to use this guidance and the development of the use of 'the purple pen of progress' which allows them to identify where improvements are being made, is leading to better quality work seen in pupils' books, particularly in writing.

Leaders have changed the organisation of teaching in the school. Class sizes have been reduced and classes now include pupils with a smaller range of abilities, particularly for English and mathematics lessons. This allows teachers to more sharply focus their teaching on pupils' needs; this is leading to pupils improving their rates of progress, particularly in English.

The development of the quality of teaching in early years is being effectively supported by local authority consultants who work with the school. The enthusiasm and skills of members of staff working in the department have been harnessed to drive improvement. Imaginative curriculum themes that interest children, particularly boys, now give opportunities for them to develop their writing in all areas of learning on a regular basis. Writing is seen as having a purpose and is enjoyed by children. Children, who were beginning a new theme based around superheroes, were keen to share their writing, telling the inspector about how their superhero was going to help find the 'missing' class hamster that had been kidnapped by an imaginary villain.

Staff in all year groups are improving their practice because they have been given some opportunities to visit other schools to see good provision and discuss its characteristics. These visits are carefully planned to meet individual teachers' training needs whilst also offering experiences in schools that have a similar context to Waterloo Primary. Additionally, appropriate staff training has been implemented in school because work with the local authority consultants and one-to-one-discussions with teachers from all year groups have been used well to identify individual teacher's training needs.

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**

The school draws effectively upon the additional support provided by the local authority to support and enhance the development of the quality of teaching. Local authority consultants for English and early years have been welcomed into the school and are working to develop both the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of leaders in monitoring the impact of actions.

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

Yours sincerely

John Nixon

**Her Majesty's Inspector**