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4 March 2015

Mandy Walker  
Headteacher  
Longford Park Primary School  
Windmill Road  
Coventry  
CV6 7AT

Dear Mrs Walker

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Longford Park Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 3 March, 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 month and year. 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.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, two assistant headteachers, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plans and post inspection plans were evaluated. A short visit was made to each classroom to look at the work in pupils' books and talk to pupils about their learning. Other documents viewed included the recent reviews of governance and the school's use of pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after), minutes of governing body meetings and outcomes of monitoring activities.

## **Main findings**

Detailed and robust plans were put in place following the inspection in November 2014. Both the school development plan and the action plan focusing on areas for improvement have clear baselines and success criteria by which to measure the impact of your planned activities. You have lost no time in responding to the key areas for development.

You and your senior leaders are clearly focused on developing pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics by providing teachers with carefully tailored training and support. A recent phonics audit across the whole staff has enabled further training in the teaching of phonics to be matched to the different needs of all staff including teaching assistants. This training is having a positive impact as seen in the well planned phonics lessons and small group intervention sessions being confidently led by teachers and support staff.

Pupils undertake a piece of writing every day, and each week they complete an extended piece of writing to develop more complex sentence structures and expand their use of expressive vocabulary. This is proving highly effective because pupils do not lack confidence in explaining their ideas, and using descriptive language to express their thinking. Pupils' writing across a range of subjects is improving due to their increase in confidence. For example, following a recent visit to Stonehenge pupils wrote a formal letter to thank the headteacher for the visit, these letters captured personal reactions to the sights they had witnessed and their reflections on their visit in a very expressive and descriptive way. In another class pupils wrote a precise description for a museum label for their clay artefact created earlier in the day. The focus on handwriting and presentation is relentless. The school has very high expectations of all writing and the appropriate way to join letters; this is reflected in all writing around school including displays and the expectations on teachers to model this all of the time. Written work in books across the ability range is of a very high standard.

You have invested in a mathematics scheme to provide all pupils with the resources for developing fluency with number bonds and counting. Pupils across the school use these resources and were observed in whole class activity and small group work responding confidently each using the resources independently to support their learning. The introduction of this programme has involved parents and is contributing well to the growing relationship between parents and school. Parents' workshops are well attended as are celebration events at the end of topics. You and your senior leaders are now well engaged with strategies to ensure that even your hardest to reach families are represented at these events.

You and the two assistant headteachers share the leadership of strategic parts of the school development, and work very closely together. You have established a detailed process by which to monitor learning and teaching. This has been achieved by the introduction of joint observations, more opportunities to informally observe what goes on in the classroom, providing detailed and challenging feedback to teachers, supporting planning where appropriate, and in some cases making changes to the organisation of the teaching space in classrooms. You have planned a significant piece of work to clearly define what effective teaching looks like 'The Longford Way'. This will provide a vehicle to drive the further improvements needed to the quality of teaching and learning, and allow for each teacher to precisely assess their effectiveness and access training to support their development. This work will allow much sharper checks to be made on the effectiveness of teaching and provide a detailed list of minimum expectations for teachers' planning and assessment so that there is greater consistency across all classrooms. The recent review of the schools' use of pupil premium identifies the need for much greater focus on planning for the different abilities of pupils, to ensure that disadvantaged pupils catch up with their classmates where they are falling behind.

Pupils' progress is kept under close scrutiny and meetings are held regularly to track, analyse and consider pupils' achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics. These meetings have provided detailed tracking of groups of pupils including disadvantaged pupils and identify who is in need of intervention strategies. Current data in school suggests a narrowing of gaps in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils compared to their peers. Thorough tracking ensures that pupils requiring additional support are identified quickly to receive intensive intervention work at the start of the day delivered by skilful teaching assistants. These sessions are providing highly structured opportunities for developing confidence in reading and basic number work and having an impact on pupil progress.

A review of governance has been undertaken. This has clearly identified areas for development in financial management and developing greater confidence with analysis of school assessment information. Governors are very reflective of the lessons learned from the inspection and are now, with some new members, confidently moving forward and beginning to provide effective challenge and support to the leadership of the school. The governors alongside you and your senior team acted swiftly to provide plans to address the areas raised during the last inspection. Governors access support from local networks, regularly work with other governors, and ensure that regular visits are made to school to support and challenge the improvement work being undertaken. The governing body now has an appropriate range of skills, knowledge and expertise to carry out their responsibilities and move the school forward.

## **External support**

The local authority officer knows the school well, and has worked closely since the last inspection providing both support and challenge. Officers are kept up to date with performance data and are making good use of the local learning community to signpost good practice. A number of visits have been undertaken to assist in the monitoring of teaching and learning and to interrogate information about the achievement of groups of pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Reeves  
**Associate Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy