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Miss E Barratt  
Headteacher  
Caldmore Community Primary School  
Carless Street  
Walsall  
WS1 3RH

Dear Miss Barratt

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Caldmore Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 5 March 2015 I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. 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 October 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 last section 5. The school should take further action to:

- identify how the success of the school development plan will be measured at key points over the year
- increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by enabling the good teachers in the school to benefit from a similar degree of coaching and support to that available to weaker teachers.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, one member of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the local leader in

education (LLE) to discuss the action taken since the last monitoring inspection. The school development plan was evaluated. Other documents were examined, including the school's checks on the quality of teaching, information about pupils' current achievement and reports from local authority visits. The work in pupils' books was scrutinised by the inspector, senior leaders and the local authority officer.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, two teachers have left the school. Three teachers have joined the school, one as assistant headteacher. The senior leadership team has been increased in number. An additional five teaching assistants have been recruited. One of these has a specific role to support pupils who speak little English. She also works with their families to help them support their children's learning at home. The school has continued to receive support from the local authority and is working in partnership with the local leader in education and her school.

## **Main findings**

The rate of improvement has sped up sharply since the previous monitoring inspection. A sense of ambition and a culture of, 'No excuses,' now exist across the school. Teaching has improved notably as a result. The school development plan now sets a clear direction for improvement through a series of well-paced and relevant actions, which include high quality training for teachers. Senior leaders and subject leaders frequently check if planned actions have been carried out successfully. However, you have not established how much improvement you expect to see at key points during the year. This means you and governors are unable to judge whether the school is on track to become good by the time of its next inspection.

Leaders make comprehensive checks on the quality of teaching. As a result, they now have an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses. A programme of support is available to teachers whose performance is not consistently good. This has had a positive impact as the overall quality of teaching has improved. Teachers whose performance is already good have not had the same opportunities to improve their practice. Consequently, the proportion of outstanding teaching is still not high enough to ensure pupils attain higher standards.

All teachers are now following the school's agreed approach to marking pupils' work. This is leading to many pupils now making good progress in writing and mathematics. The picture continues to be a little mixed because some teachers are not as skilled in using the marking system to precisely guide pupils to improve their writing or mathematics work. Senior leaders are aware of this because they frequently talk to pupils about their learning and look at their books. Following these checks, leaders inform teachers what improvement is needed. Leaders check soon

afterwards whether teachers have made the necessary changes. This has led to clear improvement in some pupils' books. In a few cases, leaders have not quite acted swiftly enough to hold some teachers to account when improvement has been too slow. This has hindered pupils' progress in these classes.

Systems for recording and tracking pupils' achievement have improved considerably since the previous monitoring visit. Senior leaders now use a detailed understanding of the attainment and progress of different pupils to inform judgements on the quality of teaching and to target additional support for any pupil who is falling behind. Teachers are now more skilled at assessing what pupils can do and what they need to learn next. This is one reason why teaching has improved and pupils are making better progress in many classes.

Governance is now much more effective. Governors now challenge the school's performance more systematically and rigorously by scrutinising information about pupils' achievement and by visiting the school to see for themselves how well pupils are learning. Governors have a more accurate view of their own strengths and they actively seek to improve their skills in order to be as effective as possible.

### **External support**

The local authority continues to offer support and challenge to leadership that is proportionate to the increasing capacity of the school to drive its own improvement. You are being well supported by the LLE and her school to refine and implement effective management systems.

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

Yours sincerely

Sandra Hayes  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**