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9 March 2015

Mrs Janette Batty  
Headteacher  
Old Town Primary School  
Billy Lane  
Old Town  
Hebden Bridge  
West Yorkshire  
HX7 8RY

Dear Mrs Batty

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Old Town Primary School, Calderdale**

Following my visit to your school on 6 March 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:

- ensure that monitoring activities focus clearly on evaluating the impact of initiatives and the difference they are making to pupils' outcomes
- ensure that leaders and teachers are clearer about levels of expectation, particularly for younger, more-able pupils
- ensure that leaders and teachers expectations about the marking pupils' work are clearly understood and consistently implemented
- sharpen the school's improvement plan to set out clearly how leaders will bring about improvements and describe key milestones and criteria to enable governors to hold leaders to account more effectively.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and your senior leaders, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. You accompanied me on a tour of the school and we visited classrooms to look at pupils' learning. A small selection of pupils' books were scrutinised to look at improvements in marking along with a range of documents including records of the school's monitoring activities, data on pupils' achievement and minutes of governing body meetings.

## **Context**

There have been no changes in staffing since the inspection.

## **Main findings**

Leaders and governors have accepted the findings of the inspection and are determined to address the issues raised in the report. Leaders have moved swiftly to engage the services of literacy and numeracy consultants to review practice in mathematics and early reading. Together with these consultants leaders have begun a range of monitoring activities including scrutiny of pupils' work, observations and organising visits to observe effective practice. However, the extent to which they follow up and check on the impact these actions are having needs further development. For example, the small scrutiny of pupils' work showed there is much to do to ensure that teacher's marking makes a difference to pupils' progress.

The school has a range of useful data which has been shared with governors. The progress and attainment of individual pupils is carefully tracked. However, the extent to which questions which emerge from this data have been checked against work in books and observations of pupils learning is not well developed. Governors have been trained in interpreting the school's data and have agreed targets for pupils' achievement at the end of each Key Stage. Nevertheless, some of these targets, for example in the early years, do not include aspiration and challenge for the most able pupils who should exceed expectations at the end of the year.

The headteacher has drafted an action plan which has been shared with leaders and governors. The plan addresses the issues identified at the last inspection. However, the extent to which the plan sets out clearly what successful outcomes will look like, how leaders will go about achieving these and provides helpful criteria and milestones to enable governors and leaders to measure improvement, needs sharpening.

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**

Support from the local authority and external consultants has enabled the school to begin to put in place training and support for teachers. This work has enabled subject leaders to have a clear view of what needs to improve and to inform their future actions.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Calderdale and as below.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Guy

## **Her Majesty's 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
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- For academies [[CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk)]
- For free schools, UTCs and studio schools [[open.FREESCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:open.FREESCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk)]
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school is a non-maintained special school [[hns.efa@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:hns.efa@education.gsi.gov.uk)]