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Mrs Anne Bedgood  
Stockton Primary School  
School Street  
Stockton  
Southam  
CV47 8JE

Dear Mrs Bedgood

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Stockton Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 12 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:

- improve achievement, provision and leadership in mathematics
- further strengthen arrangements to ensure the accuracy of assessments and the use of data to track the progress of pupils through the year
- ensure that the targets given to pupils to guide and sustain their progress in English and mathematics are used with consistent effect across the school
- ensure that governors are systematically involved in regularly evaluating the school's progress against its action plan priorities
- plan finances carefully to sustain school improvement in the face of a projected fall in numbers of pupils on roll linked to local demographic factors.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, discussions were held with you, pupils, representatives of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's improvement plans were evaluated. I visited lessons briefly with you and looked at pupils' books on a tour of the school. Documentation was scrutinised, including records of the outcomes of monitoring activities and of the work of the governing body. Parents' responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire were also considered.

## **Context**

Since the inspection the deputy headteacher has left the school and one teacher has been on long-term sickness absence. A review of governance has been completed.

## **Main findings**

You have given the school very clear direction and raised expectations throughout the school community for improving the quality of teaching and for raising the achievement of pupils. The palpable sense of forward momentum in the school is reflected in parents' increasingly positive views about its provision. You have produced detailed action plans which directly address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. In most instances these set out clear criteria by which the success of actions can be measured, as well as interim 'milestones' to enable the speed of progress in making improvements to be judged. At present, though, you are making such evaluations in relative isolation, and there is too little systematic involvement of governors in the formal review of progress made. Your evaluations, however, are accurate and well-informed from a range of evidence, including observations of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' books. You have strengthened teaching by providing improved opportunities for teachers' professional development, and by rigorously addressing weaknesses in performance.

Significant improvements have been made in addressing concerns expressed in the last inspection report about pupils' writing and care in presentation. Throughout the school there are many displays of pupils' extended writing across a range of topics, which demonstrate careful letter formation and good attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar. Progress in improving mathematics, however, is not so evident. The mathematics improvement plan does not drill down in sufficient detail to identify which skills and concepts most need improving and how these will be addressed, nor does it set out clear criteria for measuring success in terms of improved outcomes for pupils. Across the school, mathematics is not as visible as other topics, either in displays or in the use of number in other subjects. Mathematics books show some variations in progress between classes and groups. While there is evidence of extended challenge activities being set for the most able

pupils, these pupils sometimes finish work quickly and wait for others before new challenges are set.

Marked improvements have been made to provision in the Reception class. Staff comments and assessments in children's learning journals show that, since January, there has been a much sharper focus on ensuring that activities are planned to improve children's knowledge and skills. As a result, children learn and play with enjoyment and purpose.

The new marking policy has been implemented with consistent effect. It is ensuring that pupils understand how to improve their work and increasingly making sure that they respond accordingly, especially in English. Targets for attainment in English and mathematics are now set out in the front of pupils' books to enable pupils and teachers to identify what pupils can or cannot do. However, this relatively new approach is not being used to full effect in all classes at present.

Much work has been done alongside partner schools to secure the accuracy of teachers' assessments in English. This has yet to occur in mathematics. The school has moved to a new system of assessing pupils' attainment: you recognise the need to now refine this system to provide summative data on pupils' progress in each class to enable you and the governors to readily check the impact of improvement actions on outcomes for pupils.

The review of governance has been thorough and provided a clear agenda for improvement, especially in terms of governor training and definitions of responsibilities. Governors from the performance and standards committee are now taking full opportunities to visit classes and find out for themselves about pupils' learning. The governing body has, however, yet to use the findings from such visits, and other information on pupils' achievement, to work more formally with you to review the school's rate of improvement and plans for the future. Local demographic changes mean that the school will lose a relatively large group of Year 6 pupils when they leave in the summer. The impact on school finances of the likely consequent fall in the number of pupils on roll has yet to be sufficiently clearly modelled to help governors and leaders plan strategically to sustain future improvements.

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 has made very effective use of external support for improvements to teaching and leadership. The local authority improvement consultant has given valuable support to you in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, and you have valued the mentoring support of the headteacher of Long Itchington School Church of England Primary School, a good school nearby. Highly effective links have

been established with other local partner schools to enable staff to moderate assessments and to see and share good practice.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Hodgkinson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**