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5 May 2015

Mr Rod Hutchings  
Headteacher  
Lime Walk Primary School  
Lime Walk  
Bennetts End  
Hemel Hempstead  
Hertfordshire  
HP3 9LN

Dear Mr Hutchings

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lime Walk Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 1 May 2015 inspection, 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in June 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 recent section 5 inspection.

### **Evidence**

Meetings were held with you, other senior leaders and two members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also spoke to a member of the local authority by telephone. The school's action plans were evaluated and I scrutinised documentation relating to your monitoring of pupils' achievement, their work and the quality of teaching. We visited several classrooms together, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at their work.

## **Context**

Since my last visit, you have taken up post as the substantive headteacher of the school. Four teachers have left the school and have been replaced, some temporarily. Further new appointments have been made for the next academic year to increase the capacity and stability of staffing and to sustain improvement. Two new governors have been elected to replace two who have left.

## **Main findings**

You have restructured the senior leadership team and established a strong collaborative, informed approach to driving improvement. The work of the mathematics subject leader has been particularly effective in driving improvement against the priorities identified at the last inspection.

The termly plans you have implemented to drive development are succinct and well-focused. These sensibly include individual subject plans so everyone understands what needs to be done and work is focused on the most important priorities. However, some of the criteria for measuring how successful the actions you are taking are do not include the specific information needed to evaluate the progress you are making well enough.

Together with other leaders you have established a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. You are monitoring teaching more carefully and this is resulting in better targeted support which is helping teachers to improve. In some instances, there is so much information from monitoring, it is not easy to see exactly what improvements have been made and what individuals need to do next to continue to improve.

Assessment information is accurate. It shows that pupils are making faster progress as they move through the school. Different groups of pupils, including those eligible for extra support through the pupil premium funding (extra government funding for pupils eligible for free school meals) and those who have special educational needs, are making improved progress because their learning is more tightly monitored by you and other senior leaders. As a result, extra support, appropriate to their needs, is identified and given more rapidly. Through increasingly well targeted meetings with teachers, you and other leaders are both challenging and supporting them to keep all the pupils they teach on track to reach their learning targets. The impact of this is evident in pupils' work and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. In both these phases, attainment is set to improve on the outcomes achieved in 2014. The picture is not as positive in Key Stage 2. The Year 6 cohort is small and there have been several changes within it. As a result, achievement information paints a mixed picture and does not currently show the same rate of improvement that was made in 2014. This hides the evident improvements in teaching. Leaders and teachers have carefully analysed how well Year 5 pupils are achieving against the new national curriculum. Extra support has been correctly

identified to enable these pupils to make up ground against the new and higher expectations. As yet, there is still some way for some pupils to go to achieve these however, they are making stronger progress because teaching is directed at addressing the gaps identified.

Governors have sought training to improve the quality of their work. They have increased the amount of monitoring they do and so have a better understanding of the school's work. They are building a more rigorous evidence base against which they can provide both support and challenge to leaders against the improvements you are making. For example, they attend pupil progress meetings and have implemented a committee to monitor how well you are using the pupil premium funding. In a few instances, for example in understanding how well the performance of teachers is managed, there is still a need for them to develop more detailed knowledge.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

Local authority advisers have continued to provide challenge and guidance through a period of significant change in leadership and in staffing. Effective support has also been given to improve the quality of childrens' learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and to leaders of mathematics and English. You are taking a more decisive leadership role now in identifying where this responsive support is best targeted to make a difference.

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

Yours sincerely

Prue Rayner  
**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