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30 April 2015

Mrs Carole Staniland  
Headteacher  
Carter Knowle Junior School  
Carter Knowle Road  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S7 2DY

Dear Mrs Staniland

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Carter Knowle Junior School, Sheffield**

Following my visit to your school on 29 April 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 January 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. The school should take immediate action to:

- Bring forward the reconstitution and external review of the governing body
- Ensure that the governing body brings about greater stability in school leadership, stronger systems of performance management, and agrees a longer term plan with the local authority to extend the strategic relationship with the partner school.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, the acting assistant headteacher, the co-ordinator for special educational needs, the Chair of the Governing Body, a Local Leader of Education (LLE), and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since

the last inspection. School action plans were evaluated. A tour of classes was undertaken jointly with the headteacher. Other documents were also scrutinised, including the headteacher report to governors and a summary of staff feedback on changes since the inspection.

## **Context**

Immediately after the inspection, the headteacher had an accident and has been off work. She has been on a phased return for three weeks. In the interim, the school has been led by the acting deputy headteacher, supported by a LLE, the headteacher of Holt House Infant School. Almost all pupils at Holt House Infant School transfer to Carter Knowle Junior School and very few are admitted to the junior school from other schools.

## **Main findings**

The LLE has brought fresh views about what do to bring about improvement. Her support for and challenge to the acting deputy headteacher have strengthened leadership and accelerated improvement to school systems and ways of working. The headteacher, who has been unavoidably absent, is beginning to assimilate these changes.

The way teaching is judged has changed. Prior to the inspection, leaders judged teaching as good. As a result of taking greater account of the progress made by different groups of pupils, leaders now judge that most teaching requires improvement. Teachers are accepting the challenge of this more rigorous judgement and are beginning to take action to make improvements.

The collection and analysis of pupil progress data is more frequent and is beginning to provide an earlier and sharper view on progress. The acting deputy headteacher has visited the partner school to observe pupil progress meetings. As a result, leaders are planning to look at evidence from pupils' work to check assessments and identify actions to improve their progress. The accountability of individual teachers for the progress of their pupils is beginning to increase. Leaders plan to introduce systems for teachers to check the accuracy of their marking with other teachers in school. Leaders are considering whether to extend checks with other schools on the accuracy of assessment in Year 6 to other year groups. The interim leadership has made targets more aspirational.

A closer relationship with the partner infant school, which feeds the junior school, has created an opportunity for better transition from Year 2 to Year 3, and for checking and agreeing the assessment of pupils on entry to junior school. Governors report that parents welcome the closer relationship.

By working with the mathematics leader at the partner school, the new co-ordinator for mathematics is developing a plan for pupils to make more systematic progress in

learning mathematical skills. They are also developing a joint calculation policy so that pupils and parents use the same methods and terminology as they move between and through the two schools. Extra practical resources for mathematics have been purchased and training is being provided for teachers and teaching assistants to improve the teaching of investigation and reasoning.

The governing body plans to complete the external review of governance in autumn 2015, which is too slow. The governing body is still to be reconstituted to meet the statutory August 2015 deadline. The governing body should carry out the reconstitution and review with greater urgency. The governing body has been too slow to resolve the temporary appointment of senior leaders. The deputy headteacher has been acting for five years and the assistant headteacher has been acting for three years. The local authority has confirmed that staff with paid leadership responsibilities have insufficient expectations placed on their performance. The governing body does not ensure strong enough accountability between pay and performance. The governing body has become better informed about the progress of different groups but understanding of data is variable and there is little evidence of more effective challenge by governors.

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**

The LLE has been instrumental in adding temporary capacity to leadership, supporting the acting deputy headteacher, setting direction, developing school plans, introducing new systems and in extending the range of professional development. The partnership is helping middle leaders to develop their plans and implement action.

Halfway Junior School is providing a specialist leader in education (SLE) to improve the teaching of Year 6. Plans are in place for another SLE to support for Year 3 in the summer term.

The local authority has brokered effective partnerships to support school leadership and improve the quality of professional development.

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

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**