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8 May 2015

Mrs Sarah Atkinson  
Headteacher  
Stillington Primary School  
Main Street  
Stillington  
York  
North Yorkshire  
YO61 1LA

Dear Mrs Atkinson

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Stillington Primary School, North Yorkshire**

Following my visit to your school on 8 May 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 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 the actions contained within the school improvement plan to improve pupils' progress in writing and mathematics are clearly linked to the skills, knowledge and understanding that they are expected to acquire
- monitor regularly, the learning that is taking place during lessons and the contribution that teaching makes to it
- increase the momentum of improvement by utilising the experience and knowledge of external partners particularly where they have successfully raised achievement.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and a senior leader, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The action plans, including the English and mathematics subject action plans, and the system for checking pupil progress were evaluated. Other documents were scrutinised including the outcomes of monitoring activities, reports to governors and local authority notes of visit. The inspector, accompanied by the headteacher, also made a brief tour of the school.

## **Context**

Previous staffing difficulties have now been addressed. There is now a permanent member of staff in Key Stage 2 and subject responsibilities have been delegated.

## **Main findings**

Following a period of staffing turbulence and issues related to behaviour management, all staff have worked hard to strengthen pupil relationships and have improved the quality of communication and links with parents.

The school's strategies to improve the quality of teaching are realistic. However, the plans to improve pupils' progress in writing and mathematics are not sufficiently clear about the skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils are expected to acquire. As a result, evaluation of the impact of the strategies employed to improve progress cannot be made against precise measures of success.

The approach to monitoring teaching quality would benefit from a more systematic approach and a greater emphasis on the impact that teaching has on learning. This would also help the headteacher and subject leaders develop a clearer picture of the impact of their actions.

Staff have received joint training with a neighbouring school regarding ways to give feedback to pupils so that they know how to improve their own learning. This is beginning to have an impact and pupils are starting to correct their own work.

Leaders and teachers have worked with the Easingwold partnership to ensure that assessments relating to pupils' achievements are accurate across all primary phases. Further work with the North Star Teaching Schools' Alliance is planned to improve the ability of teachers to pitch work appropriately thereby ensuring the correct level of challenge for all pupils.

The governing body have accessed a range of support from the local authority and have subsequently devised a governor monitoring plan. This is in the early stages of implementation and should be reviewed to include clear, measurable actions to ensure it has the required impact.

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 local authority has supported the headteacher in formulating a new school action plan and improving teaching in Key Stage 2 mathematics. They have provided advice to the governing body about using data and working collaboratively with other governing bodies. They have also started to broker the support of the North Star Teaching School's Alliance to help improve teachers' expectations of pupils and ensure challenge for all abilities.

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

Yours sincerely

Suzanne Lithgow  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**