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22 June 2015

Mrs Lisa Valla  
Headteacher  
London Colney Primary School  
Alexander Road  
London Colney  
St Albans  
AL2 1JG

Dear Mrs Valla

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to London Colney Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 19 June 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 February 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:

- use effective monitoring procedures with rigour to eliminate any inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and your deputy, subject leaders for English and mathematics, five governors and a representative of the local authority. I also had a tour of the school, talked to some of the pupils and looked at work in their books. The action plan was evaluated alongside the latest monitoring reports by yourself and the local authority school improvement partner.

## **Context**

Several teachers are leaving at the end of this term to be replaced by permanent teachers at the start of the next academic year.

## **Main findings**

Under your determined but supportive leadership the staff have been quick to tackle the key issues from the inspection. You have worked closely with staff and governors to implement a detailed action plan for school improvement. This plan identifies specifically who has responsibility for each action, when each should be completed and who will monitor the impact of these on school improvement. Targets are specific and linked closely to pupil progress within realistic timescales. Analysis of your monitoring records and a review of pupils' books confirms that improvements in the quality of teaching and achievement in English and mathematics are becoming evident.

In partnership with the school leadership team and local authority teaching and learning advisers you quickly tackled weaknesses in teaching mathematics. Your vision of re-organising the Nursery and Reception classes into one specific area of the school is now a reality. Inconsistencies are being eliminated and the provision for these children is quickly becoming a foundation for good achievement. Discussions with yourself and my scrutiny of pupils' books confirm that teachers provide pupils with appropriate written feedback on what they have achieved and what they need to do next to improve. Our review confirms that the quality and impact of this marking on pupil progress remains inconsistent across the school. However, examples of high quality marking exist, such as in Year 3, that can be used as a model of best practice for others to follow.

Your monitoring of teaching and learning across the school regularly identifies emerging strengths and further improvement. From this monitoring it is clear that some inconsistencies still remain. The inclusion of all teachers in monitoring their subject through half termly staff meeting sessions is establishing a culture of continuous improvement throughout the school. Monitoring activity by the governing body provides them with a better understanding about the impact of school improvement on the achievement of pupils. They make good use of data to ask challenging questions of yourself and other senior staff about the rate of improvement and achievement of different groups of pupils.

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 provides effective support. It is good that you commissioned local authority teaching and learning advisers to provide extra staff training in English,

mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is clear that this support is proving to be effective in the development of teachers' expertise and confidence in these areas. Termly meetings with the local authority school improvement partner enable you to assess progress made against the action plan effectively.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann  
**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