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9 December 2015

Nic Bates  
Headteacher  
Burbage Junior School  
Grove Road  
Burbage  
Hinkley  
Leicestershire  
LE10 2AD

Dear Mr Bates

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Burbage Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 1 December 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 May 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 in order to become a good school. Leaders should take further action to:

- ensure that, for all years, and for disadvantaged pupils in particular, governors receive information on the proportion of pupils making at least expected progress, and the proportion of pupils making more than this.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, the subject leaders for mathematics, other teachers who do not hold leadership positions and an advisor from the local authority, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plan and undertook a scrutiny of pupils' work. I met with parents at the start of the school day and examined both the school behaviour log and the recent information about

pupil outcomes that you have given to governors. I also toured the school with you to see lessons taking place in different classes in all year groups.

## **Context**

There have been no significant changes since the inspection.

## **Main findings**

You and the governing body have written an effective action plan which you have begun to implement well. Staff that I spoke to during my visit are very positive about the changes that have already taken place and confirm that definite improvements have occurred because of them. You are giving them the confidence to continue to work their hardest so that the school becomes good or better at its next inspection. Teachers say that they have received effective training and support in order to ensure that their teaching is consistently good in all year groups.

Teachers' expectations are rising across the school. Pupils are now completing more challenging work and the most able are being given increasing opportunities to apply advanced reasoning skills in their mathematics. Pupils that I spoke with during my visit say that they have noticed an improvement in the level of challenge for them this school year. However, a minority of them say that they do not yet have opportunities in every lesson to go on to work that really makes them think hard.

You have employed new staff to ensure that both those pupils who need to catch up and the most-able pupils receive better support. Pupils who I met confirmed that this is improving their confidence and helping them to get better with their writing and mathematics.

The advice that teachers are giving to pupils is giving them a better idea about what they need to improve next. The school's new marking policy is being followed well. Pupils are taking note of this advice and making faster progress. Pupils say that the advice that teachers give them is very helpful. You are now keeping efficient records of any incidents of poor behaviour from pupils. The records are neatly set out and record both the details of incidents and what action has been taken as a result. Pupils I met were very keen to tell me that that bullying has reduced greatly this school year and that you and your staff deal with any problems or worries quickly and properly.

The governing body is quickly becoming an effective group which is learning to hold you and other senior leaders to account. As a result of the external review of governance that governors have commissioned, they have formed different committees to check that improvements are taking place across the school. They have also received training and support on how to challenge you where pupil progress is not good enough. Governors are scheduled to come into school next term to look at pupils' written work and to tour the school to see where good learning is taking place. As a result of a review of the school's spending of the pupil

premium, you and the governing body have also improved the support that disadvantaged pupils receive. Governors understand that the success of this spending will depend on the how quickly the gap closes between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and both other pupils in the school and other pupils nationally.

You have begun to supply governors with useful information to show the progress rates in different year groups. However, you do not yet show them the proportions of pupils making at least expected progress, and the proportions making more than expected progress. This means that they are unable to check whether sufficient pupils are making good progress over time. You have agreed to send me your forthcoming headteacher's report to the governing body to show that this is being attended to.

The majority of parents who I met during my visit feel that communication with them is improving. You have introduced an additional system of emailing parents important information and have created a new phone application so that they will receive news and alerts promptly. You have also begun better information evenings for them so that new parents will know more about what pupils are learning. However, you agree that more needs to be done so that communication with them is consistently effective and that parents receive a good level of information. You are particularly keen for all parents to receive regular information on how their child is attaining, in relation to other pupils of the same age, as well as what progress they are making.

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 helped the school by commissioning support through the Affinity Teaching and Learning Alliance. You and the governing body believe that this has been extremely valuable in checking your action plan for effectiveness and, in particular, in helping the subject leaders of mathematics to improve provision for the most able. You feel that the level of ongoing advice has given you and the governing body greatly increased confidence in driving forward changes so that outcomes for all pupils are good or better. The local authority is committed to continuing this support so that the school sustains its improvement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire and the Director of the Affinity Teaching and Learning Alliance.

Yours sincerely

Roary Pownall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**