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Mrs Celia Irwin  
Blisworth Community Primary School  
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NN7 3DD

Dear Mrs Irwin

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Blisworth Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 27 November 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 April 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. The school should take further action to:

- draw upon the good practice seen in the post-Ofsted action plan to make sure that the wider elements of school life are not missed in the school development plan, and ensure that governors monitor these aspects closely
- develop the role of the subject leader so that they are fully able to hold teachers to account for the progress pupils make in their area of responsibility.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, three members of the governing body, including the chair, and a representative from the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plan and post-Ofsted action plan and I checked the single central record to make sure that

appropriate checks had been undertaken for new staff. I met with the literacy and mathematics leaders, and the coordinator for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. I spoke with a group of pupils and undertook a scrutiny of pupils' books. I walked round the school with you to see the learning that was taking place in each class.

## **Context**

One newly qualified teacher joined the school in September 2015. The deputy headteacher has very recently taken responsibility for leading mathematics across the school. There has been no change to the governing body since the last section 5 inspection.

On the day of my visit, you were hosting the grand opening of 'The Big Build'. This is an adaptation of the school's attic room, which will provide useful additional space for instrumental lessons and small group work. Over recent months, you have managed well some disruption to the working environment for the pupils and staff to make sure that learning was not compromised during this time of development.

## **Main findings**

While you were disappointed with the outcome of the recent section 5 inspection, you and the governors wasted no time in responding to the areas for improvement. You quickly devised an action plan, detailed with timescales, to outline the work that you agreed needed to be done.

You have implemented a new system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. This is still in its infancy, but you and your subject leaders meet termly with teachers to discuss the progress pupils have made. You ensure that additional support is provided so that pupils do not fall behind. Following these meetings, subject leaders check regularly with teachers to make sure that pupils are making progress towards their targets.

Subject leaders acknowledge that their roles have changed since the last inspection. They have a greater understanding of their responsibility to hold teachers to account, and they provide useful support and coaching for staff to improve their teaching.

The member of staff with responsibility for those pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs has given much-needed guidance to teaching assistants, including providing them with useful training to improve the impact of their role. She checks that teaching assistants are putting into practice the new skills they have developed in order to support pupils effectively in their learning. This member of staff meets regularly with the governor who has responsibility for

overseeing the provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to discuss the impact of this provision on pupils who are in receipt of additional support.

It is evident in pupils' books that the new marking policy is being applied consistently across the school. The pupils I spoke to said that the feedback teachers give them helps them to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding. They said teachers give them time to make corrections and to respond to the additional challenges that are set for them.

The governing body has reviewed its roles and responsibilities. There is now a named governor who makes sure that the website contains all the statutory information it should. This is checked frequently.

Governors have received training to enable them to ask more challenging questions when they visit school. You and your subject leaders say that you are being held to account much more rigorously than you were before. Just like you, the governors whom I met with are very ambitious for the school and want the pupils to do well.

Governors have made sure that they are checking the progress of pupils much more closely. A newly formed group called 'scrutiny governors' meets regularly with the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the teachers of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. They discuss the progress that pupils have been making in detail.

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**

You and the governors have received important support from the local authority, Fairfield Teaching School Alliance and the headteacher of Hayfield Cross Primary School. This has included training for governors to be able to challenge leaders effectively. You have also received additional support with checking the quality of teaching and learning from an external consultant.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Northamptonshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Di Mullan  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**