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22 December 2015

Nasira Frost  
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Dear Mrs Frost

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Greenfield Primary School and Early Years Centre**

Following my visit to your school on 8 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. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that children access a balanced and broad range of activities in the early years provision
- continue to provide support to teachers to ensure that improvements in the quality the teaching of writing are consistent across the school
- make sure that teachers plan work for pupils that matches their ability
- provide training for governors to give them the skills they require to hold leaders fully to account for the impact of their actions.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, subject leaders, a group of pupils from the School Council, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. Documents were scrutinised,

including the school development plan and assessment information. I also visited a number of classrooms with you to speak to pupils, look at their books and observe their learning.

## **Context**

There have been a number of staffing changes since the previous inspection. These include the appointment of a new mathematics leader and a new assistant headteacher. Two members of the governing body have left their roles.

## **Main findings**

The recent inspection held few surprises for you or governors and confirmed your own appraisal that standards need to improve. You utilised the short time available before the end of the summer term to begin to raise expectations by addressing the issue of pupils' poor presentation of their work.

Pupils now take care with their work and are proud of their achievements. Work in mathematics books is set out clearly and carefully, helping pupils with their calculations. English books show that pupils are working hard to improve their handwriting and achieve a 'pen licence'. Nonetheless, expectations must not be allowed to slip. In a very small number of books, there is evidence that some teachers are beginning to accept work from some pupils that is not their best.

Your plan for improvement sets out clear and ambitious targets to raise pupils' achievement across the school. Newly formed staff teams are beginning to meet regularly to evaluate your plan. This is helping to keep improvements on track and ensures that everyone understands their role in school improvement.

A local authority consultant has worked closely with the school to support improvements in the early years provision. The outdoor environment now has a wide range of attractive and clearly defined areas. 'Challenge cards' help adults to explain to children what learning should take place during each activity in each area. Throughout my observations in the early years, children were attentive and engaged in their activities. However, care needs to be taken to ensure that children are equally motivated by activities indoors, so that they are able to develop a broad range of skills.

New displays in each early years classroom help to celebrate what children achieve. Parents are starting to become more involved in helping their children's learning as teachers are beginning to share ideas of how to develop skills at home. However, teachers do not always collect material evidence of children's work. As a consequence, judging accurately the progress that children make in areas such as writing and number is difficult.

Middle leaders are playing an important role in supporting you to bring about the changes required to move the school forward. The English subject leader has worked closely with an external consultant to introduce a new system to teach writing. This is beginning to have a positive impact in some classes. Leaders' checks show that some teachers require further support to ensure that these improvements are consistently strong across the school.

Greater emphasis is now being given to how pupils apply their phonic skills (letters and the sounds they make). You have invested in resources that support learning and now use tests as a tool to gauge pupils' understanding of what they have learnt. As a result, you report that a greater proportion of pupils are now on track to reach the expected standard in the phonics screening test by the end of Year 1.

The mathematics subject leader has correctly identified that teachers need to provide greater opportunities for pupils to deepen their mathematical understanding through problem solving and reasoning activities. An external consultant provided training for all teachers in October. My checks of pupils' mathematics books show that while there have been improvements these are at an early stage and have been adopted more successfully in some classes than in others.

Teachers' efforts to plan lessons in mathematics that meet the needs of all groups of pupils are beginning to pay dividends. In some classes pupils are making good progress during their lessons. However, leaders recognise that improvements in this area are still at an early stage. Inconsistencies remain, meaning that some groups of pupils do not make the progress that they are capable of. An external consultant is scheduled to continue to work with teachers to help develop this area further.

Pupils who spoke to me during my visit are pleased with the changes that you have introduced. They say that improvements in their handwriting mean that they are now proud of the work that they produce. They are being given opportunities to respond to teachers' feedback and to tackle further challenges or correct work in their purple pens. Pupils in Key Stage 2 value the work that they undertake during reading sessions as it is improving their understanding of difficult words and texts. Your efforts to enliven the curriculum through providing exciting educational trips are also given praise by pupils. During my discussions, they shared their excitement to be visiting a museum to learn about LS Lowry. Older pupils are scheduled to go on a residential trip for the first time in 12 years.

Governors are becoming more frequent visitors to the school so that they can find out for themselves what impact your actions are having. They are keen to play their role in supporting and challenging you and other senior leaders. However, they do not currently have all of the skills that they need to do this. They are due to attend training that will go some way in giving them the abilities that they need to interpret school data. As we discussed, a training plan would further build upon governor's skills so that they are able to fully undertake their role.

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 provided extensive support that has been instrumental in helping the school to implement changes in the early years and begin to improve the quality of teaching across the school. Regular meetings are held with senior leaders to ensure that plans are robust and that actions are having a positive impact.

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

Yours sincerely

Martin Bell

**Her Majesty's Inspector**