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Mr Dan Sutton  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Sutton

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Newnham Primary School**

Following my visit to your academy on 25 January 2016, 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in July 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders, governors and the academy sponsor are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order to become a good academy.

The academy should take further action to:

- amend the academy improvement plan so that it is clear to all involved, and so it better supports governors in holding leaders to account
- make sure that academy-wide improvements, strategies and policies are consistently implemented by all staff.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the administrator of the single central record, the teachers, the teaching assistants, a representative of the academy's sponsor, David Ross Education Trust (DRET), and members of the local governing body. I evaluated the academy improvement plan. I also accompanied you on a tour of the school and spoke with some pupils. I also looked at some of the pupils' books. We reviewed pupil performance information for pupils currently at the school and monitoring records such as those on the quality of teaching. Prior to the inspection, I reviewed previous inspection reports, the academy's website, published performance information and findings from Parent View.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, you have been made substantive executive headteacher, following a short period as interim executive headteacher, and two teachers have returned from maternity leave. As a result, staffing is much more stable than at the time of the previous inspection.

A large proportion of the academy has been redecorated and refurbished, including new interactive whiteboards and equipment in the early years.

## **Main findings**

Academy leaders have responded promptly and effectively to address the issues identified through the inspection in July. They have put in place an improvement plan with support from the representative of the academy sponsor. The plan addresses the academy's areas for improvement over an appropriate timescale. However, the plan is not as clear as it needs to be and does not clearly show the activities that relate to each area.

As the plan is not structured clearly enough, it is difficult for governors to identify how actions relate to the areas for improvement. This makes it difficult for them to hold academy leaders and the sponsor to account appropriately. While it has its strengths, such as clearly setting out what needs to be done and the intended outcomes, the plan does not clearly record who will monitor and evaluate actions; on some occasions, it is the same individual. This needs to be clarified.

You have acted promptly to raise the expectations of teachers and to clarify their responsibility for their own teaching and the outcomes of their pupils.

You have quickly established a positive environment and teachers were keen to tell me how they enjoy coming to school each day and appreciate the high level of support and challenge.

You have introduced effective systems for tracking pupil progress and for assuring the quality of teaching and learning. These systems and processes include focused pupil progress meetings and monitoring activities such as lesson observations and book scrutiny. As a result, teachers know the pupils who are at risk of underachieving and are working hard to ensure they catch up.

Teachers are also clear about what they need to do to improve their teaching because of the feedback you provide following lesson observations and 'drop-ins'. You are also using performance management of teachers to support school improvement. For example, teachers have pupil outcomes targets for their areas of responsibility. As a result, teachers are clear about this responsibility and the actions they are taking to meet it. Teaching assistants are less clear about their deployment and accountability for the progress of individual pupils.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the academy until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The David Ross Education Trust has provided appropriate support to the academy since July 2015, and you are making good use of it. Representatives of the trust have worked effectively with you to support staff and to raise their expectations. The trust's improvement cluster lead has provided you with effective challenge and support. He has also facilitated valuable school-to-school support, and opportunities to attend training and networking meetings. He is also effectively supporting you to improve teaching and increase the leadership capacity of the academy.

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

Yours sincerely

Derek Myers  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**