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Mrs Rebecca Waters  
Headteacher  
Dogsthorpe Infant School  
Central Avenue  
Dogsthorpe  
Peterborough  
PE1 4LH

Dear Mrs Waters

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Dogsthorpe Infant School**

Following my visit to your school on 21 September 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 2013. 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 that were identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become a good school. You should take further action to:

- make sure that the purposes of the activities teachers plan for mathematics problem-solving lessons are explained well to all pupils and that they effectively deepen their understanding of the new skills they are learning.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. I scrutinised your information regarding the monitoring of teaching and learning, considered achievement information, including your new systems for recording assessment of pupils' learning, and we discussed

your evaluation of the quality of the school's work. We visited all classrooms, looked at pupils' work and talked to them about their learning.

## **Context**

You were appointed as the substantive headteacher from April 2015. You are seeking to appoint a new deputy headteacher; this role is currently held by a member of school staff in a temporary capacity. There are five new teachers. The governing body has been reconstituted; it now has eight members and is led by a new Chair, who has been in position since April 2015.

## **Main findings**

You have strengthened leadership by appointing learning and teaching managers who are accountable for the quality of teaching and learning in the year group for which you have made them responsible. They are also leading the day-to-day work of their teams. This has increased the amount and immediacy of feedback teachers receive about their work, as well as the support they are given to improve the way they meet pupils' learning needs. In addition, the English and mathematics subject leaders are now part of the senior leadership team and are held to account for the outcomes pupils achieve in these subjects.

The significant changes in staffing this term mean that your expectations for high-quality provision are not being consistently met. Evidence from previous monitoring of teaching which draws together information about pupils' achievement, from scrutiny of pupils' work, and from observations of teaching shows you have a strong capacity to bring about improvement where it is needed. Well-targeted plans mean that the timescales by which improvement is expected are short and action is taken quickly where necessary. Staff receive appropriate support to develop professionally and rigorous challenge to make changes to their work when they are required.

Working closely with staff, you have increased expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. You have made a number of changes to the curriculum which have increased pupils' engagement in learning. These changes have also extended the amount pupils are expected to learn and enabled them to use their English and mathematics skills meaningfully in other subjects. In some of the newly developed mathematics lessons we saw, pupils were encouraged to use their knowledge to solve open-ended problems. Most pupils worked well in these activities and showed resilience in their attitudes to learning. However, some of the activities were not explained sufficiently well to enable pupils to learn all they could from them.

The new Chair of Governors is experienced in her role. She has challenged other governors to take a stronger role in driving improvement and is ensuring that governors have skills that can be used to good advantage in supporting and monitoring the school's work. For example, new governors have experience in education, financial management and safeguarding. Rigorous procedures are in

place to enable governors to monitor the school's work and so understand to what extent improvements are being achieved. To ensure that they are effective in their analysis and challenge, the governors commissioned a review of how well the school uses the extra funding it receives to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. The useful report from this analysis has just been received.

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 responsive and effective support to keep the school stable during a period of considerable change. Advisers have brokered an experienced consultant to support the implementation of new procedures for managing the school's work and to help ensure a smooth transition to your leadership. They have seconded a part-time deputy headteacher to the school to support the improvement of mathematics teaching and were responsible for initiating the substantial changes to governance. In addition, advisers have helped to ensure that the school's assessment is accurate and endorsed your judgements about the quality of teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Prue Rayner  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**