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Mr Ian Wilkinson  
Headteacher  
Deeping St James Community Primary School  
Hereward Way  
Deeping St James  
Peterborough  
PE6 8PZ

Dear Mr Wilkinson

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Deeping St James Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 5 October 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 is the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 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 last section 5 inspection, in order to become a good school.

#### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and one of the assistant headteachers, subject leaders for English and mathematics, and the Chair of the Governing Body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also held a telephone conversation with the external adviser for the school. I scrutinised a range of documents and visited every classroom. I also looked at pupils' work and held a discussion with a group of pupils about their work.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, one teacher has left the school and a part-time assistant headteacher has returned from maternity leave. A new teacher started in Year 4 in September 2015. Four new teaching assistants have been employed throughout the school.

## **Main findings**

Senior leaders and governors have acted swiftly in response to the findings from the last inspection. A detailed post-inspection action plan was written to address all the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. The actions in this plan have been evaluated and the new school development plan continues to address the key areas for improvement. Each action in the plan has clear success criteria by which leaders and governors can check to see if the action taken has been effective.

Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are now more rigorous. They have increased the frequency and range of scrutiny of pupils' books, and have made more regular checks on teachers' planning. The information they have gleaned from these checks has been fed back to teachers to help improve their performance. As a result, teachers have raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Pupils are now making better progress and more are attaining the higher levels in Key Stage 2. Unconfirmed information from the end of Key Stage 2 assessments in 2015 shows that more pupils are attaining the higher Level 5 than in previous years in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition, more pupils have made more than expected progress in mathematics and writing between Years 2 and 6 than previously.

Leaders have correctly identified that pupils' progress and the attainment of the most able is too inconsistent in Key Stage 1. Although there has been an increase in the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in writing at Key Stage 1 in 2015, the numbers of pupils attaining Level 3 in reading and mathematics are still below national averages. Leaders have organised for Key Stage 1 teachers to visit an outstanding school to help them to identify how they can improve the quality of teaching.

The school has changed how mathematics lessons are structured to set work at the appropriate level for pupils. As a result, pupils' progress in mathematics has improved. However, some pupils did tell me that they find some of the work too easy. School leaders have already identified that more training is needed for staff to teach mathematical problem solving.

The assistant headteacher, with subject responsibility for mathematics, is effectively supporting the subject leader for English to develop her leadership skills. The joint checking of pupils' books has informed training needs for the staff at the school. Pupils are writing independently across a range of subjects, including science, topic and religious education (RE), and the quality of this work is checked by the leadership team.

The school has changed the way it teaches grammar, punctuation and spelling. As a consequence, pupils have made faster progress. Teachers are writing detailed comments in books to help pupils improve their work. However, not all teachers are consistently giving pupils time to respond to the comments.

You have ensured that systems to manage the performance of teachers are more robust. The school takes account of a range of evidence to inform decision making about individual teachers' performance, including pupils' progress over time.

The governing body has been very proactive since the last inspection and governors have worked hard to improve their leadership skills. They quickly organised a review of governance and wrote an action plan to address the key areas following the review. Governors have also accessed training on how to hold the school to account. As a result, governors have increased their checks on the school's work to find out for themselves how the school is performing.

The school's safeguarding procedures continue to meet requirements. However, the latest safeguarding policy does not include all the latest guidance and needs to be revised again. The school website is still not compliant with government regulations and this also needs to be addressed. I will check the school's website on 2 November 2015 to ensure that it has become compliant.

### **External support**

The school has received good support from the local authority through the external adviser. She supported the governors to write their own action plan following the review of governance. She has also supported school leaders to improve the quality of teaching.

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

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

Yours sincerely

Martin Finch  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**