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13 July 2016

Ms Andrea Clark  
Waterloo Primary School  
Worthington Street  
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OL7 9NA

Dear Ms Clark

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

Following my visit to your school on 21 June 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 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 March 2016. 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 course of the inspection, I held meetings with you and your deputy headteacher and with one of the co-chairs of the governing body. A group of parents met with me to share their views of the school and of their children's progress. I met with pupils representing Years 2, 4 and 6 including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. I also had informal conversations with other pupils around the school. I contacted the local authority school improvement adviser by telephone to discuss the action taken since the last inspection and the level of support provided by the local authority. Various documents, including the school's self-evaluation summary and the improvement

plan, were examined. I visited classrooms with you to gauge pupils' progress in English and mathematics and I conducted a scrutiny of a selection of pupils' English and mathematics books.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, two newly qualified teachers have been made permanent members of staff and one of your Year 2 teachers has taken maternity leave. You also appointed three higher-level teaching assistants.

## **Main findings**

It is clear that effective steps have been taken to begin to improve the quality of teaching in school so that it becomes at least good. You regularly monitor teaching, and your summaries show some evidence of improvement. Records also indicate that you have put in place training to develop the teaching skills of teaching assistants. There is a new policy in place to ensure consistency in marking and feedback to support pupils and enable them to make at least expected progress. Conversations with pupils reveal that a period for completing corrections is given. Where this happens regularly, pupils are able to make better progress. However, there are still inconsistencies. In some books, while teachers adhere to the policy in terms of its presentation, there are examples where pupils have made mistakes but have not had the opportunity to correct them in line with your policy, particularly in writing. Overall, although there are signs of improvement in the quality of teaching, there is still some distance to go, so that stronger outcomes emerge for pupils across the school.

While it is evident that pupils are making better progress in the early years and key stage 1 than before, there is still not enough progress across key stage 2 and especially in Year 6. Attainment in particular is weak in Year 6, and the school's own assessments indicate that there will be a low percentage of pupils attaining standards expected for their age by the end of the school year. Assessment information for other years in key stage 2 is less weak, but it indicates that performance across key stage 2 is still inconsistent.

Children in the early years are mostly making good progress from their starting points. Current assessment information shows that 60% are on track to reach a good level of development by the end of Reception. This represents a good improvement on last year's figure of 53%, but is likely to be below average.

In key stage 1 current pupils are making good progress overall. In the Year 1 check on phonics, 63% of pupils are on track to reach the expected standard this year, as compared to 52% last year. In Year 2, pupils are also on course to reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, thereby halting the historical pattern of low attainment. These standards represent good progress from pupils' starting points.

The behaviour of pupils has improved. You have taken swift action to eradicate occasional low-level disruption and prejudice-based behaviour that was noted in the previous inspection report. I saw pupils working appropriately and in a focused fashion in all classes. On the one or two occasions where pupils' behaviour lapsed, teachers intervened promptly. Behaviour in the dining hall was well managed by the staff on duty, who were placed strategically to supervise to good effect. Pupils chatted to their friends and moved sensibly with their dinner trays. Pupils themselves, as confirmed in my discussions, said that behaviour has improved considerably since the previous inspection. They noted and appreciated that shouting out in class is less frequent now and that the new behaviour system, with its consistent rewards and sanctions, is beginning to have an effect.

Pupils also spoke of your programme of assemblies and termly themes around values such as respect, caring and sharing. They feel that you successfully convey important messages around issues such as avoiding homophobic language. They say that there are very few examples of these incidents now, but that they are reported and dealt with on the rare occasion that they arise.

You have begun to improve links between school and parents. You outlined the various actions you have taken, including a parents' meeting to discuss issues that they wanted to raise, and you are now developing these. The parents who spoke to me are all very positive about this change and welcome the improved communication links, including weekly newsletters from teachers and a periodical letter from you. They also expressed satisfaction at the wider actions that have been taken and are beginning to bear fruit, with one parent stating that the school has been 'superb' in its dealings with him. All in all, you have made a good start at addressing the previous issues around parental involvement.

The leadership and management of special educational needs have started to improve. You have established more robust monitoring systems involving, for instance, weekly meetings with the special educational needs coordinator. Together you are analysing regularly the attainment information of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A rearrangement of your pupils' progress meetings, where it is now you who lead them and not phase leaders, is increasing the level of accountability among teachers for the progress of such pupils. However, it is too early to ascertain the effectiveness of these changes and the gap in achievement between pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and other pupils is still too wide. Furthermore, there is still some

confusion about which children require a 'Plan-Do-Review' document and which do not.

### **External support**

The local authority has provided effective support to the school, and records show regular involvement of local authority staff. Officers have focused their interventions on improving the quality of teaching, with a particular focus on the early years and key stage 1. This support is beginning to have a positive effect, as evidenced by the improving picture presented by the most recent assessment information.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Tameside. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mark Quinn  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**