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6 September 2016

Mr Robert Gooding  
Executive headteacher  
Langham CofE Primary Academy  
1 Burley Road  
Langham  
Oakham  
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Dear Mr Gooding

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Langham CofE Primary Academy**

Following my visit to your school on 12 July 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 October 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, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the subject leaders for English and mathematics, the early years leader and the leader with responsibility for coordinating the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SENCo). I also met with three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I evaluated your plans for improvement and looked at a range of school documents, including minutes from governing body meetings and information about the safeguarding of pupils. I made visits to classes with you, looked at work in books and met with a group of key stage 2 pupils. I also reviewed the school's website.

## **Context**

Since the inspection in October 2015 four members of support staff have left the school and two teachers now share the role of subject leader for mathematics.

## **Main findings**

You lead the school, in strong partnership with the headteacher, with passion and determination and have wasted no time in addressing the areas for improvement which were identified at the previous inspection. You have successfully shared your vision for Langham CofE Primary Academy with governors and school staff. As a result standards in the school are rising.

Your plans for school improvement are detailed and clear and are supporting positive developments in all aspects of the school's work. You have set ambitious timescales for individual actions to be achieved and have ensured that leaders and teachers have received the training and resources needed to deliver the changes required.

The quality of middle leadership in the school has improved dramatically since the last inspection and this is contributing significantly to improvements in teaching and learning. Senior leaders have supported subject leaders very effectively. They have modelled strategies to monitor, challenge and support the work of teachers and support staff across the school. You have also drawn on the skills of senior leaders from other schools within the Rutland Learning Multi-Academy Trust to model effective leadership to your staff. The middle leaders now conduct regular observations of teaching and learning in all classes, scrutinise work in pupils' books and lead pupil progress meetings. Consequently, all leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The leaders were all eager to tell me that there is a much greater sense of accountability in the school and that all staff are very clear that they will be held to account for the progress and attainment of pupils, and that in this respect, 'the culture of our school is completely different from how it was'.

You ensure that early years practice in the school is now highly valued. You have supported the early years leader in her heartfelt ambition to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the Reception class. The quality of teaching has been strengthened considerably due to her careful tracking and analysis of children's progress. Consequently, children's attainment is higher than it has been in previous years, particularly in the areas of reading and number. The early years leader recognises that there is more to do to improve children's writing and has increased the range and quality of writing activities. Together, we observed one Reception boy completely immersed in a writing activity in the outdoor area. When asked about his writing, he confidently and proudly told you that he was writing tickets 'for Bugtopia!'.

The school's investment in new resources for the Reception class and the complete overhaul and redesign of the outdoor area are also contributing to improvements in the early years. The outdoor environment is now an exciting and enjoyable place to learn. It successfully supports children's learning by motivating them to take part in a wide range of exciting and challenging activities to develop skills across all areas of learning.

You have worked exceptionally hard to ensure that teachers' assessments of pupils' progress and attainment are accurate. Teachers have worked together to moderate and challenge one another's judgements. The school's recent assessments of pupils' attainment in key stage 1 indicate that the proportions of pupils attaining the expected skills in their reading, writing and mathematics are above those typically seen nationally this year. However, you acknowledge that there is more to be done to raise the attainment of the most able pupils. The school's records also indicate that pupils in Year 6 are attaining above national expectations in reading and writing and are broadly in line with those for mathematics. However, as with key stage 1, not enough of the most able pupils appear to be reaching their full potential. The outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are improving. This is due to the more precise way in which teachers are assessing pupils' learning and have improved the planning of pupils' work.

Following the last inspection, the school swiftly commissioned a review of governance. The chair of the governing body is proud of the significant strides that the governing body has taken to ensure that governors understand their roles and execute their duties effectively. Governors also told me that you provide them with clear information about pupils' attainment and progress and that, of even greater importance, 'we now understand the information which we are being shown – this was not always the case in the past'. Consequently, governors now offer increasingly effective challenge and support, and this is contributing to the upward trend of improvement in all aspects of the school's work.

### **External support**

The school continues to have positive and productive working relationships with the local authority, primarily through the work of two school improvement advisers. A key feature of this support has been to successfully develop the school's systems for moderating its assessments of pupils' learning and to develop the early years provision effectively.

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

Yours sincerely

Clare Cossor  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**