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Matt Bolger and Alex Owens  
Meadowside Primary School  
Park Road  
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Northamptonshire  
NN15 5QY

Dear Mr Bolger and Mrs Owens

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

Following my visit to your school on 27 April 2017, 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 March 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- develop the skills and knowledge of the new leadership team so that they fully contribute to accelerating pupils' progress and raising standards for pupils.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you, subject leaders and representatives from the governing body, including the chair, to discuss actions taken since the last inspection. I visited all classes, accompanied by you, and looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke with them about their learning. I also spoke formally with a group of pupils.

I considered a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation plan and action plans; minutes from senior leadership meetings and weekly action plans were also evaluated. I spoke with a local authority school improvement adviser and reviewed the

local authority external reports. I scrutinised the safeguarding policy and the single central record.

## **Context**

Since the previous monitoring inspection, the headteacher and one of the deputy headteachers have left the school. Mr Bolger, you have been appointed as interim headteacher for four terms from the summer term onwards. You have support from the executive headteacher, Mrs Owens, for two days a week and the leadership team has been restructured. One teacher and two teaching assistants have resigned their positions. There are currently two vacancies on the governing body.

## **Main findings**

Not all teachers are providing pupils with work that is appropriately challenging in mathematics. You recognise that the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is variable across the school. You have plans in place to improve the quality of planning and to ensure that teachers understand the precise learning needs of their pupils through a programme of coaching by senior leaders. Some staff have already visited other schools to see good practice; however, it is too early to see its impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning.

You regularly check on the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in mathematics. For example, you have already established weekly book reviews to ensure that teachers provide learning activities that challenge pupils. However, you acknowledge that more time is needed for teachers to show the impact of feedback they have received from you on how to raise standards in mathematics.

Subject leaders do not yet have a good enough knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects in order to take the necessary action to raise standards rapidly. The mathematics leaders have recently established a programme of monitoring activities to check on pupils' progress, such as visiting lessons, reviewing pupils' workbooks and providing feedback to teachers. Nevertheless, you recognise that more time is needed to assess the impact of the work of subject leaders and to ensure that there is greater consistency in raising pupils' achievement across the school.

You have established a new leadership team which is being developed through senior leadership coaching. These leaders are becoming more confident in their roles and have a greater understanding of what is expected of them, because you meet regularly with them. At these meetings, you clearly communicate your expectations and check on actions taken by subject leaders to improve standards. You and the subject leaders recognise that more time is needed to show the impact of recent actions taken to improve teaching and learning consistently across the school.

You have appointed phase leaders to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, particularly the provision of mathematics, through daily 'touch base' meetings. However, these regular 'touch base' meetings have not yet been in place long enough to show their full impact on the revised planning and teaching to better meet the needs of all pupils.

A new assessment system to check on pupils' progress and attainment has recently been implemented. Subject leaders are starting to use this information to check on how well pupils are learning through looking at pupils' books, and observing teachers and pupils in the classroom. Teachers are not yet consistently using information about pupils' progress and attainment in their planning to deliver teaching and learning that are currently effective enough to raise pupils' achievement.

You have revised the school's action plan to closely and appropriately match the areas in need of improvement. You have also included actions to address the additional findings from a recent local authority review, which was undertaken with the previous headteacher. As a result, teachers and teaching staff know what the key school priorities are and their role in ensuring that pupils' outcomes improve.

Members of the governing body have a realistic and precise overview of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, as a result of the school's revised action plan. Nevertheless, more time is needed for members of the governing body to work alongside a national leader of governance so they acquire the necessary skills to accurately evaluate the impact of the work of the school's leaders.

### **External support**

You have increased the level of external support to help you improve the quality of the school's work. You are working alongside the executive headteacher to improve the quality of teaching and learning and develop subject leaders' skills. Nevertheless, you recognise that more time is needed to assess the impact of recent actions taken since your joint appointment. The local authority has provided support through the provision of a national leader of governance to support the development of the governing body. However, more time is needed to assess the impact of this work. The local authority has also conducted a recent review of the school.

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

Emma Nuttall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**