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14 June 2017

Josephine Blackburn  
Claybrooke Primary School  
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Leicestershire  
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Dear Mrs Blackburn

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

Following my visit to your school on 24 May 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in June 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.

The school should take further action to:

- improve the rigour and effectiveness of senior leaders in their identification of, and checking on, the actions needed to secure rapid school improvement.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other senior and subject leaders, members of the governing body, and a national leader of education who has been supporting the school to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated and a number of

documents relating to the school's performance and the safeguarding of pupils, and pupils' progress tracking information, were reviewed. Together with you, I visited all classrooms and looked at samples of pupils' work.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, three new members of teaching staff have joined the school, one of whom is also the school's assistant headteacher. There is a new special educational needs coordinator, who is a long-serving member of staff. The school is due to convert to become an academy later this year, but this has already been delayed at least once. Close relationships have been built with key figures in the new multi-academy trust that the school will be joining. The school has received support from a number of sources, focusing on improving the skills of subject leaders and the quality of teaching and learning.

## **Main findings**

Immediately after the previous inspection, senior leaders responded quickly to introduce programmes to check on the quality of teaching and learning. Their initial monitoring practices led to action being taken successfully to improve the quality and consistency of learning in all classes. The regularity of their actions to check standards has declined during the year, however, and this has led to inconsistencies in the work in pupils' books. For example, policies relating to assessment and teachers' feedback to pupils are not applied consistently and, as a result, some pupils are not making as much progress as they could.

Leaders' plans for school improvement are based on the issues identified at the last inspection. These actions are usually well thought through and appropriate to the needs of the school. The majority of plans are, however, too general. They do not identify or include measures for the intended impact and leaders are not as clear as they need to be about what is going well and what needs to improve further.

The governing body is effective in holding senior leaders to account. It asks pertinent questions and offers significant levels of challenge when needed. It now insists on much more concise and detailed information from the headteacher and this ensures that it has an increasingly secure knowledge of the school and what is required to improve it further.

Subject leaders are now better equipped than they were to hold their colleagues to account for the quality of teaching in their subjects. Leaders have created a professional working atmosphere, where teachers and teaching assistants take responsibility for the progress of every pupil. Pupils' progress is discussed formally at least termly and this is ensuring that leaders have a good knowledge of each pupil's strengths and any additional support that they may need. This collaborative approach is ensuring that pupils make progress from their starting points.

The majority of teachers give feedback to pupils in line with the school's revised policy. Pupils' work is assessed regularly and there is some evidence to show that, where the school's policy is followed, teachers' feedback is effective in accelerating pupils' progress. Overall, teachers' feedback still does not consistently support the pupils with the next steps in their learning. When teachers set additional tasks, pupils are not regularly given the time they need to reflect upon and complete them.

Teachers' knowledge of the curriculum is improving. This is particularly evident in pupils' mathematics books. Pupils are taught a range of calculation strategies and are increasingly given opportunities to explain what they have done and why, in relation to mathematical problems. Teachers' understanding of writing is less strong. Consequently, their assessments of pupils' progress and attainment in writing are less reliable than they are in mathematics.

In the majority of cases, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have increased. The same is true for teachers' expectations of the presentation of pupils' work. The introduction of a standard approach to handwriting and spelling has reaped rewards for most pupils. There are still instances when pupils of different abilities or ages are completing the same tasks without teachers taking due regard for the appropriate level of challenge. In these cases, pupils do not progress as well as they might and their learning is not deepened.

### **External support**

The school receives additional support from a local teaching schools alliance. In particular, this support has provided more opportunities for leaders and teachers to identify accurately the standards of pupils' work. The school's leaders speak highly of how this and the involvement of a national leader of education are helping to secure improvements at the school, particularly in mathematics. The local authority's involvement in supporting the school's improvement has been minimal.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen McMullan  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**