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28 February 2018

Miss Donna Christy  
Langland Community School  
Langland Road  
Netherfield  
Milton Keynes  
Buckinghamshire  
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Dear Miss Christy

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Langland Community School**

Following my visit to your school on 25 January 2018, 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 in June 2016.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

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

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that school leaders receive the support needed to quicken the pace of improvement in teaching in order to secure a swift rise in achievement for all groups of pupils.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you and other senior leaders. I also met with members of the governing body and held a meeting by telephone with a local authority representative. I evaluated the school's action plan and scrutinised other documents, including information about pupils' achievement. You and I made short visits to five lessons, together with the deputy headteacher, to look at the impact of leaders' work to improve teaching.

## **Context**

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes in the leadership and teaching team. The previous headteacher left in the summer of 2016. A plan to bring in an executive headteacher, and some of her staff, fell through. You were promoted to the role of interim headteacher from your previous role as deputy headteacher. In April 2017, your post was made permanent. An interim deputy headteacher was in place from September 2016 until the end of July 2017. This post was filled on a permanent basis in August 2017 with the promotion of the assistant headteacher. The assistant headteacher post has been filled on an interim basis through an internal appointment from August 2017 and was again filled on an interim basis through an internal appointment in January 2018. Staff turnover has been high. Approximately one third of the teaching staff were new in the autumn of 2016, and there was a similar level of turnover last September. Due to staff vacancies, two senior leaders were required to take on a full teaching load during the 2016/17 academic year. This led to a significant reduction in leadership capacity.

## **Main findings**

You and governors acknowledge that the pace of improvement in pupils' achievement has not been fast enough. You have been hampered by high staff turnover and limited leadership capacity. You provide a clear sense of direction and drive. Together with your leadership team, you have successfully tightened leadership and management systems and approaches. The school development plan is sound and work to improve teaching is increasingly rigorous. Improved monitoring, coupled with a more bespoke approach to teachers' development, is making a difference. Leaders' scrutiny of teaching and pupils' work tells you that teaching is better than it was. However, this is yet to translate into notably sustained improvements in pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' achievement in these subjects at the end of each key stage remained low in 2017. School assessment information indicates that, although there has been some improvement, the progress of current pupils remains inconsistent. Too few are catching up well from previous underachievement. During our visits to lessons, we were encouraged to see how well pupils now sustain concentration and engagement, even when they are stuck. However, pupils were not consistently tackling work of suitable challenge. You recognise that this needs further attention.

You have responded well to a helpful external review of pupil premium funding. The school now has a sharp pupil premium funding statement and spending plan. Leaders are much better placed than previously to ensure effective use of the funding to support the social and emotional development, and the academic progress, of disadvantaged pupils.

Since the last inspection, the level of fixed-term exclusion has risen considerably. Your introduction of a new behaviour policy and improved approaches to

supporting pupils with challenging behaviour is working. Incidents of poor behaviour have reduced considerably. The level of fixed-term exclusion and the number of pupils excluded more than once have also started to reduce. However, levels of exclusion remain considerably above those seen nationally. Pupils' absence has also been a cause for concern. The proportion of pupils with low attendance increased notably last year. Leaders' increased focus on supporting pupils and their families to attend regularly is helping to reverse this trend.

### **External support**

You have made some good use of external support. Leaders' engagement with a national leadership programme has helped you put a sound monitoring and staff development approach in place. Work with the local mathematics hub has helped improve the quality of the mathematics curriculum and teachers' confidence in teaching the subject. However, support to augment leadership capacity and help you drive swift sustained improvement in the face of high staff turnover has been limited. The local authority provides challenge to the school through regular meetings with leaders and governors and visits to the school. However, the local authority has not maintained a consistently sharp understanding of the extent to which teaching is improving or where further attention and support are needed. External verification of school leaders' self-evaluation has been limited.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the school governance committee, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Milton Keynes. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Diana Choulerton  
**Ofsted Inspector**