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Mrs Bethan Gingell  
Paganel Primary School  
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Birmingham  
West Midlands  
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Dear Mrs Gingell

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

Following my visit to your school on 6 November 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring 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 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. At its section 5 inspection before the one that took place in November 2017, the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to ensure that:

- teaching across school is consistently good or better
- pupils are challenged in more lessons by staff:
  - acquiring the skills to question pupils so as to deepen their understanding
  - providing more activities that help pupils develop their own ideas for moving their learning forward
- the curriculum is developed to promote more opportunities for:
  - writing across all subjects

- pupils to make links with their prior learning.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, the chair of the governing body and a representative of the Birmingham Education Partnership to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement and action plans were evaluated. Other activities included classroom visits and scrutiny of data and pupils' work.

## **Context**

There have been a number of significant staff changes since the last inspection, including the appointment of your deputy and other senior leaders. These appointments have significantly strengthened your leadership team. However, at present, there are still staff vacancies, which you are working hard to fill. The chair of the governing body has been recently appointed and is already challenging and supporting the school's improvement journey.

## **Main findings**

You have been instrumental in bringing about improvements at Paganel Primary School. Your passion, drive and enthusiasm are infectious and this results in a positive ethos which can be seen throughout the school. You and your leadership team have high expectations of your staff team in order for pupils at Paganel to fulfil their potential.

Action plans are clearly focused on areas that were identified at the last inspection and, as a result of these plans and monitoring schedules, progress in all key areas is starting to be made. This is resulting in improved outcomes for children throughout the school.

The new middle leadership team has been appointed and there are clear lines of accountability. This ensures that all staff are sure of their roles and responsibilities and what their input is in terms of the improvement journey at Paganel.

Governors challenge and support the school appropriately. The new chair of governors is clear about what areas need improving and how governors can contribute effectively.

Assessment data is used much more strategically to drive school improvement than was the case previously.

Leaders have improved the rigour of assessment practices across school and this ensures that teachers plan work that is appropriate and moves pupils' learning

forward. As a result, more pupils in Year 6 last year achieved the expected and higher standards appropriate for their age. Nevertheless, standards still need to improve across the school.

Teachers are becoming much more skilled at using data to ensure that they meet the needs of their pupils, and in some classes the most able are working independently on more challenging tasks. However, there are still times when weaker teaching slows down some pupils' progress.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are starting to make accelerated progress and as a result, more of these pupils are reaching age-related standards and the gap is narrowing. Paganell has a high number of pupils with complex needs who are given individualised support, resulting in their receiving high-quality provision, both academically and socially.

Where adults are used effectively in lessons, pupils' misconceptions are being picked up and pupils improve their own work. The quality of feedback given to pupils is variable, but where it is strong, progress is also rapid in both mathematics and English.

Staff instability is still having an effect on the quality of teaching and learning in some classes. As a consequence, the quality of teaching remains variable. Although leaders are trying to put in the necessary support, improvements will take time. This is an area that leaders are aware of and they understand the need to address this as a matter of urgency.

In many lessons, teachers are providing activities that are a good match to pupils' learning needs, but there is scope for improvement in this aspect across the school.

Standards across the school in mathematics have generally improved. Training and coaching of staff have been undertaken to ensure that staff are aware of what progress looks like in and across year groups. The mathematics leader has written a clear framework for the less experienced staff to use as a reference.

As a result of the pupil premium review, the differences in attainment between the disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils are reducing. You have taken the advice of the reviewer and rapidly implemented suggested strategies. Due to your passion and commitment to this group of pupils, improvements in both attainment and achievement can be seen across the school. Support for the disadvantaged pupils is now a real strength of the school.

Where teaching is strong, there is evidence of questioning being used by the teachers to make the pupils think more deeply. However, this practice is still inconsistently applied. Although the number of pupils achieving greater depth has improved in writing and mathematics, this is still an area for further improvement.

Writing across the curriculum was an area of focus last year and some improvements were made. However, due to the high turnover of staff, pupils' writing skills are not yet consistently applied in different subjects. Leaders have identified this aspect of work as a priority for improvement. The leader for English has identified the need to provide pupils with a curriculum that creates opportunities for them to write independently and apply their knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects.

Your new leader in early years and the phase leader worked together to accurately use assessment data and plan appropriate learning experiences for the children. As a result, the number of children achieving a good level of development has increased.

### **External support**

Since the section 5 inspection, Birmingham Education Partnership has provided effective support to the school. A pupil premium review has taken place and a clear action plan has been produced. An effective governing body now regularly monitors and evaluates the progress that the school is making.

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

Yours sincerely

Kate Brunt  
**Ofsted Inspector**