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8 February 2013

Mrs Coleen Shepherd  
Headteacher  
Woolden Hill Primary School  
Netherfield Road  
Anstey  
Leicester  
LE7 7ES

Dear Mrs Shepherd

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Woolden Hill Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 07 February 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in November 2012.

#### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, representatives of the governing body and of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plans were evaluated.

#### **Context**

There have been no significant changes to staffing arrangements since the last section 5 inspection. The local authority is using its statutory powers to seek approval from the Secretary of State to convert the school to an academy.

## **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

Senior leaders have started the process of improving the school. They make sure that the actions they take have a sharper focus on the issues identified for improvement during the last section 5 inspection. These actions have included making more regular checks on pupils' attainment and the progress that pupils are making. They are carrying out more focused lesson observations, collecting more detailed assessment information and making regular checks that this information matches the work in pupils' books. Senior leaders have been well supported in this work by an experienced National Leader of Education. They are more aware of the achievement of different groups of pupils and the importance of making sure that any gaps in learning between different groups are closed. Support and training have been provided to help teachers to improve, particularly to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve and to help teachers to make sure that all pupils are challenged to do as well as they can. Senior leaders are beginning to use the information they collect about how well pupils are doing to hold teachers to account for the success of their work.

Not enough urgency has been brought to putting sharply focused plans in place to drive school improvement as quickly as possible. Improvement plans for literacy and numeracy have been rewritten, but they lack clear targets for improvement and actions that can be measured with specific deadlines to check on their success. The headteacher has begun to redraft the whole-school improvement plan but this work is in its early stages. The local authority statement of action identifies appropriate types of support and actions to be taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning, leadership and governance. However, because changes are being made to the way that the local authority is organising its support for schools it is not clear at this time who is going to deliver this support and when it is to be delivered.

Members of the governing body demonstrate their commitment to helping the school to improve. They acknowledge that they have not focused well enough on asking leaders questions to check on how well the school is improving pupils' achievement. They have attended training to help them make better use of the information they receive about the school's work and are starting to ask leaders more challenging questions. They are beginning a programme of visits to school to check at first-hand on its work. The headteacher acknowledges that, at present, the information given to the governing body by senior school leaders does not give governors a full and clear picture of the relative success of what is being done to improve the school.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is not fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is not fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**