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11 February 2013

Ms V Luniak  
Headteacher  
Beulah Junior School  
Beulah Road  
Thornton Heath  
CR7 8JF

Dear Ms Luniak

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Beulah Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 5 February 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. 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 November 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

#### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, representatives from the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. The school's post-Ofsted action plan and other related documents were evaluated. The HMI also carried out a tour of the school with the headteacher.

#### **Context**

Since the previous inspection the teacher responsible for managing provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has started maternity leave. In the interim, this role is being carried out jointly by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. A teacher responsible for managing provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language has left the school.

## **Main findings**

Senior leaders have made appropriate use of the recommendations from the section 5 inspection to devise an action plan which addresses the key areas for improvement. This plan sets out the actions to be taken and identifies the person responsible for checking they are implemented across the school. However, while overall end of year attainment targets are included, not all of the actions to be taken are linked to clear, measurable success criteria. This makes it difficult for senior staff and governors to know if specific strategies to raise attainment are having enough impact. The school's end of year targets for mathematics are not challenging enough. Even if the targets are met, attainment in mathematics will still be too low and will not have improved enough compared to last year. The school has not yet charted precisely what needs to be achieved for the school to become good by the time of its next inspection.

School leaders have arranged training to strengthen teachers' understanding of how pupils learn to read. They are now ensuring that all pupils receive teaching which systematically addresses weaknesses in their reading. The school has also set out clearer expectations for teachers to help raise the quality of guided reading sessions. Effective strategies to garner support from parents to support their children's reading are not in place.

The curriculum has been adapted to provide more time for pupils to practice mental maths. Training for teachers is beginning to ensure that teaching approaches are more consistent and effective. Intervention strategies to support pupils who have fallen behind have been increased. These initiatives are all quite recent however, and their impact on pupil's achievement has not been assessed. Strategies to improve the quality and consistency of marking are proving effective and analysis of pupils' work by senior staff shows that 'next-steps' marking has improved.

The governing body recognise that they did not hold school leaders to account enough before. Training since the inspection has strengthened their skills significantly. In particular, governors are now much more aware of their roles and responsibilities and are much more confident in asking challenging questions. Governance has been restructured to enable governors to focus more sharply on the areas in need of most improvement. A new committee has been established to monitor the effectiveness of school's strategies to address the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. Governors know that they need to strengthen further their understanding of primary school data to be able to fully check on the school's progress.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- ensure attainment targets are ambitious enough, particularly in mathematics

- ensure that strategies to raise attainment are evaluated against clear and measurable success criteria which show the impact of each action on pupil's attainment.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The school has received increased support from the local authority since the last inspection. This has included training for teachers to improve their skills in teaching pupils to read and in teaching mathematics. Plans are in place for the local authority to review these aspects of provision in the Spring term 2013. An external review of behaviour has also taken place. The local authority recognises the need to strengthen links between the infant and junior schools to increase the consistency of teaching and assessment in Years 2 and 3.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Croydon.

Yours sincerely

**Daniel Burton**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**