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Mr S Guest  
Headteacher  
Colebourne Primary School  
Stechford Road  
Hodge Hill  
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Dear Mr Guest

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

Following my visit to your school on 9 September 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking incisive and urgent action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- accelerate the progress of pupils in Year 5, especially in writing
- increase the frequency of pupil progress meetings
- clarify who will be evaluating particular improvements, how and by when, specifying clear roles for the governing body, local authority and members of the leadership team
- ensure, as a matter of urgency, that an external review of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the governing body is carried out.

### **Evidence**

During the visit I met with you and the deputy headteacher to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. Meetings were held with four members of the governing body including the Chair of Governors, 10 students from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and a representative of the local authority. You showed me around the school and we visited every class to see the pupils at work. I evaluated the school improvement

action plans. I looked at a range of documentation, including the school's information about pupils' progress and minutes of the meeting held by the governing body after the inspection in June.

## **Context**

Since June 2013, there has been a change to the subject leadership of mathematics. This is now the responsibility of the deputy headteacher. The leadership team has been restructured. Three additional teachers have been appointed to work in the mornings to lead intervention separately in Key Stage 1, Years 4 and 5 and Year 6.

## **Main findings**

Senior leaders have acted swiftly to improve teaching. Ambitious targets are now set for individual pupils and teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils say that there is greater challenge in their work. A new marking policy is in place, and as a result teachers are becoming better at letting pupils know precisely what to do to improve their work. Pupils said that teachers are now more helpful and that the marking helps them make their work even better. Leaders have increased the number of mathematics lessons from 4 to 6 lessons a week which includes a specific lesson for extra mathematics support. Pupils said that this extra session is helping them to better understand the work and to remember key skills and information.

All leaders and teachers monitor the effect teaching has on pupil progress. Individual targets that pupils should be able to achieve are being used by each class teacher. The most recent assessment information shows that pupils in Year 5 are not making expected progress, especially in writing. Meetings between leaders and teachers to discuss the progress of pupils have been introduced. However, these are not frequent enough to enable early intervention for pupils falling behind.

Actions in the new improvement plans are clear and appropriate. They address the areas requiring improvement pinpointed by the inspection. However, the dates by which specific targets will have been met have not been set and it is unclear who will be evaluating progress towards targets and how and to whom the progress will be reported.

Governors have acted promptly to improve how they monitor, support and challenge leaders. Governors have produced a development plan and restructured their committees in order to focus on the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. Governors have looked at the work of pupils this term to see if the strategies teachers have implemented are raising standards. The minutes of the governing body meeting in July 2013 show that they are asking challenging questions of leaders. However, the external review of governance has not yet been carried out.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

## **External support**

The local authority provides effective support for the school. A new improvement adviser has started this term. The previous school improvement adviser and the school improvement consultant measured the progress the school is making by collecting first-hand evidence, for example through observing lessons. An external consultant is providing helpful support to teachers and teaching assistants in developing the teaching of mathematics. More support is to be provided for four teachers through the Maths Specialist Teacher (MAST) Programme. Four local schools are providing useful support in a range of areas, for example on using data to track pupil progress and improving the quality of marking and feedback to pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Humphries  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**