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30 January 2014

Steve Down  
St Luke's CofE Primary School  
French's Road  
Cambridge  
CB4 3JZ

Dear Mr Down

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Luke's CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 29 January 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the 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 visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in October 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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

- consolidate the skills of subject leaders so that they contribute to improving teaching, learning and assessment across the full range of subjects.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you and the senior leadership team. I met four governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke to the local authority adviser. I evaluated the post-Ofsted action plan and the school development plan. We carried out brief visits to lessons and spoke to teachers and pupils about their work.

### **Main findings**

Immediately after the inspection, you took swift action to draw up a post-Ofsted action plan and tackle the weaknesses, particularly the use of lesson time and assessment. Consequently, the school is making rapid progress towards becoming a

good school. The governors and your senior team drive improvement through frequent reviews of the progress made against your key priorities. The already good behaviour of pupils is further enhanced by teachers now giving pupils more opportunities to apply their learning and to find things out for themselves. There are ample opportunities for staff to train and develop their skills. As we visited classes, I noted that consistent approaches are used to provide pupils with clear targets on what they need to do to improve. I saw high levels of perseverance in Year 4 where pupils were trying to find difficult words in their dictionaries and, in Year 6, where older pupils were striving to bring magic and fantasy into their writing. As I walked around the school, I saw pupils who were eager to learn. There was a palpable desire to do well in lessons with pupils proud to explain to me what they were doing and why.

With your senior leadership and governors you are tackling weaknesses with determination. Your priorities and actions are relevant to the needs of the school and governors are checking progress at regular intervals. More coherence and synergy between your school development plan and your post Ofsted action plan are required and we discussed how these two documents could be merged. You are aware of the challenges posed by historical gaps in pupils' knowledge in some classes and you are taking steps to accelerate learning for these groups.

You have good systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching. With the support of the deputy headteacher, you are ensuring that monitoring is frequent and helpful to staff. Although subject leaders are keeping abreast of curriculum development, their contribution to improving teaching, learning and assessment is underdeveloped.

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 school welcomes the support and challenge that the education adviser from the Diocese of Ely provides. The local authority is also available for additional support. Links with other schools enable staff to share outstanding practice and you belong to a range of useful networks.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Cambridgeshire and the education adviser for the Diocese of Ely.

Yours sincerely

Marianick Ellender-Gelé  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**