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8 July 2014

Kevin Allbutt  
Headteacher  
Leek First School  
East Street  
Leek  
ST13 6LF

Dear Mr Allbutt

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Leek First School**

Following my visit to your school on 7 July 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the 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 visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 2014. 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:

- ensure that the monitoring evidence collected relates to the actions identified in the school improvement plan
- ensure that the minutes of the governing body record accurately their challenge and the actions which result.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, your senior leadership team, the Chair, and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school's plans for improvement, the impact of the outcomes of monitoring activities. I also reviewed some of the school's achievement data. I visited the majority of

classes, talked to a number of pupils and looked at samples of pupils' books. I was unable to meet any pupils in Years 3 and 4 as they were out of school on visits.

## **Context**

There have been no changes since the recent inspection.

## **Main findings**

You and your senior leadership team are working with a renewed sense of urgency to tackle the key issues identified in the recent inspection. You have re-shaped your school improvement plan to focus on these priorities. You have identified appropriate actions within a suitable timescale linked to your pupil progress collection points. Governors and the local authority's core group monitor your plan closely. However, your collection of evidence does not always link sufficiently tightly to your plan. Therefore, opportunities to demonstrate your progress are missed.

You have tightened your monitoring of teaching to include information about pupils' progress. Consequently, you hold teachers more effectively to account for the progress of different groups of pupils in their classes. This has raised expectations for teaching. You are able to identify poor pupil progress more quickly because of this. This has enabled you to have a more accurate evaluation of the impact of funding on the progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium.

Teachers' planning is improving because of your recently introduced non-negotiables. Teachers are expected to take account of different pupils' starting points and to choose resources that are better matched to support learning.

Pupils' attendance is beginning to improve. You have analysed your attendance data and you are developing different strategies to tackle poor attendance.

Governors have had an external review and have a clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They have used this information to help them identify where they need training. Governors are more confident in challenging you, however the minutes of meetings do not record this clearly. A review of the school's use of pupil premium funding has begun.

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 has an accurate view of the school. The local authority makes effective use of the core group to monitor and support the school. The additional support of a local leader of education is helping senior leaders build their capacity and hone their leadership skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Michelle Parker  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**