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17 October 2014

Jacqui Grace  
Interim Headteacher  
Rectory Farm Primary School  
Olden Road  
Rectory Farm  
Northampton  
NN3 5DD

Dear Mrs Grace

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Rectory Farm Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 16 October 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the interim headteacher and the deputy headteacher, representatives of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, and a group of teachers. The inspector toured the school, inside and out. He observed assemblies and visited the Early Years phase. He observed break, holding discussions with pupils, and the dining hall, holding discussions with supervisory staff. He scrutinised a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour, and accidents.

## **Context**

The school is being led currently by an interim headteacher. The senior leadership team is new to the school this term. The Chair of Governors took office shortly before the end of the summer term. There has been a significant turnover in staffing at the beginning of this academic year.

## **Main findings**

Many developments to improve the work of the school are at a very early stage of implementation. Since beginning work at the beginning of this term, you, the senior leaders and governing body have focussed on sorting out basic and essential systems at the school. New routines have been introduced, for example, for managing behaviour, but it is apparent that much work remains to be done.

You have used a programme of external reviews and audits well to identify key priorities for improving core functions of the school, including safeguarding. You have taken action immediately on some of the most urgent things, including issues to do with the security of the site, and plans are being drawn up to tackle all of the issues raised by the audits. There is not, however, a school improvement plan in place currently, which addresses both the areas for improvement from the inspection and the priorities emerging from your current activities.

Actions to improve the pupils' behaviour are beginning to have an effect. The school is calmer and more orderly than it was. I observed the pupils conducting themselves appropriately when moving to assemblies, during assemblies, in the dining hall, and when returning to lessons. The school has kept numerous records of instances of misbehaviour and accidents. The records indicate that not enough action has been taken to keep parents and carers informed about things that have happened to their children.

You have begun to check the work of the teachers more systematically. As a result, you are providing them with clear guidance and objectives for improving their practice. This has led already to a more-consistent approach to marking the pupils' work. The teachers appreciate and are responding positively to the direction you are providing. The greater profile of the governing body around the school is also helping to drive improvements.

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 has benefitted from a high level of effective support from the local authority, which has been significant in supporting the improvements that are now becoming evident. Arrangements are in place to continue with the much-needed

support, for example, by helping you to make links with other Good, or Outstanding schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss

**Her Majesty's Inspector**