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14 January 2015

Mrs Judith Osler  
Executive Headteacher  
Trumpington Meadows Primary School  
Hauxton Road  
Cambridge  
CB2 9FT

Dear Mrs Osler

### **Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Trumpington Meadows Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 13 January 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in May 2014. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State the Chair of the Governing Body, and the Director of Children's Services for Cambridgeshire.

Yours sincerely

Peter Limm  
**Additional Inspector**

**Once the school has had 24 hours to report any factual inaccuracies**, the post-inspection letter is copied as appropriate to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body or equivalent
- Local authority – (including where a school is an academy)
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation

**A copy with editing marked up should be forwarded to the lead inspector**

## Annex

### The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2014

- Improve teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement, particularly in writing and in the development of essential reading skills, by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of the progress all pupils can make, and the standards more able pupils, in particular, are capable of reaching
  - ensuring that teachers take account of what pupils already know, understand and can do so that past learning is built on well, and pupils do not lose interest because of activities that are too hard or too easy
  - ensuring that teachers frequently check on the pace of pupils' learning, especially in English in Years 3 to 6, so that they can move the pupils on more quickly or give them more support as appropriate
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their skill in writing at length for different purposes, especially in Years 3 to 6
  - making sure that basic skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar are given good attention in Years 3 to 6
  - ensuring that teaching develops essential reading skills effectively
  - providing feedback to pupils, orally and through marking, so that they know clearly what they have done well and what they need to do better.
  
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and the pace of improvement by:
  - using a range of information to rigorously analyse the extent to which teaching in different subjects and classes supports learning for all pupils
  - using this analysis to take swift action to rectify weaknesses that limit learning across the school, and for groups of pupils, including the more able
  - ensuring that all teachers with significant responsibilities drive improvements in their areas.

An external review of governance, including the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 13 January 2015**

### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher and other key leaders in the school, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and two representatives of the local authority. The inspector observed six lessons, during which he looked at pupils' books and other work.

### **Context**

An assistant headteacher has left the school and been replaced by a teacher already employed by the federation. The previously acting assistant headteacher has been promoted to assistant headteacher. A Year 1 teacher has left and been replaced by an experienced teacher who will take up her appointment after the next half-term. The governing body has constructed a detailed development plan and has amended its committee structure in order to focus more tightly on the school's key priorities and provide more effective challenge. It continues to benefit from good governor training. The governing body has continued to explore options for the future organisation of the school but no firm decisions have been taken.

### **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

The headteacher and staff have continued to make improvements in the areas for development identified by the section 5 inspection. The senior team has been strengthened and continues to support developments well. The systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching have been developed further and the quality of teaching has continued to improve. Teachers plan lessons that are stimulating and which engage pupils productively and enthusiastically. The school's rigorous process for generating assessment information has been developed further and all teachers are using this to help accelerate pupil progress further, especially in Key Stage 1.

Policies that were new at the time of the previous monitoring inspection are now more firmly established. This is evident in the better rates of progress made by pupils in nearly all classes, although attainment in Year 6 remains low. There have been improvements in the teaching of phonics, which is becoming a strength of the school. School policies in relation to marking have been consolidated and most pupils now regularly respond to their teachers' comments in their books. Teaching assistants have been deployed more effectively and now give good support and guidance for pupils in classes, as well as recording pupils' progress more rigorously and carefully. There are more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in Years 3 to 6, and this has enabled the more able, especially, to produce more creative and lively writing. This success has still not yet been demonstrated by many other pupils in Year 6.

The governing body has drawn up a detailed development plan and restructured its committees so that it now provides good challenge as well as support for the school. Governors have been trained well and have grown confidently in their roles. They make regular visits to the school and to classrooms. They rigorously analyse school performance data and ask pertinent questions of the headteacher and other members of staff when necessary; for instance, in tracking the progress made by those pupils for whom the school receives special support funding.

### **Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- The school has pressed forward positively and well with implementing the improvement development plan. All teachers are now fully aware of their roles in this process.
- The senior team continues to support school improvement developments well and monitors rigorously the performance of each class.
- Subject and other leaders have continued to grow in confidence and have contributed well to the approaches taken to secure improvement. The impact of this has been most marked in improvements in the teaching of phonics and other aspects of literacy, such as writing. The more-able writers have benefited from the new creative writing programme developed for them.
- All teachers use the improved assessment information to plan their work so that the specific learning needs of all groups of pupils are addressed more effectively.
- The approach to using transition books to enable a smooth start when pupils move from one class to another has been introduced and managed very effectively.
- The governing body has allocated governors to specific improvement themes and strengthened the process by which they report on, and record, their improvement visits to the school. This has helped the governing body to enhance its analysis and evaluation of how well the school performs.

### **Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- The improved approaches to teaching have helped to accelerate the pace of pupils' progress so that the gap between the school's performance and that expected nationally has been closed, or is closing rapidly, except for Year 6 where it is still too wide. Approaches adopted by the school to eradicate this underachievement, though sensible, have been only marginally successful with the group of pupils who remain 'stuck' at a low level of attainment. The successful approaches adopted to improve the writing of the more able pupils in Year 6 have yet to be developed for less-able writers in Year 6.
- Although the marking policy has had a positive impact, there remain inconsistencies in the way teachers use 'next steps' marking comments in books, and some pupils in Key Stage 1 do not know how to make meaningful responses to them.
- Despite the school's focus on improving the quality of pupils' work, there is still evidence of poorly presented work in a few books.

- The school has not yet fully engaged parents in supporting their child's work or ensuring that most parents know how to do this effectively.

### **External support**

The local authority provides excellent support for the school and challenges it rigorously to improve. The school improvement meetings with the local authority have been highly valued by the headteacher and the governing body. Very good local adviser support has been provided for early years, literacy, numeracy, and approaches to assessment and setting appropriately challenging work across the school. This support has led to more rapid pupil progress in Reception and Key Stage 1, and has improved the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2, despite the fact that attainment remains low in Year 6.