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Sara Bennett & Tamar McCarty
Headteachers
Holbrook Primary School
Gateside Road
Coventry
CV6 6FR

Dear Mrs Bennett & Mrs McCarty

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Holbrook Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 25 June 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 January 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:

- sustain the improvements in leadership, including governance, and continue the robust focus on improving the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement
- continue to work with pupils and families to improve the attendance of those who do not attend as regularly as they should and close the gap with the national average for primary schools.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and other senior and subject leaders, a group of pupils and the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Governing Body. HMI held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority and met with the lead headteacher from the Hub. The Hub is a local school to school

support network. A range of documentation was reviewed including feedback to staff following lesson observations and reviews of pupils' work and the latest information about pupils' achievement. You joined HMI on brief visits to classrooms to review pupils' learning and to talk to pupils. The school improvement plans were evaluated.

Context

Since my last visit there have been significant changes to the governing body. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing body have resigned. A new Chair and Vice Chair of Governors have been appointed. The governing body has been reconstituted. Five new governors have been appointed. Two members of staff have resigned. The governing body have appointed an additional Assistant Headteacher, a Learning Mentor and an additional Teaching Assistant. The new Assistant Headteacher joined the school in May 2014. The two other members of staff will join the school in September.

Main findings

You and other senior leaders have responded to the issues raised in the previous monitoring inspection with a sense of urgency and a determination to succeed. Your amended school improvement plan is now focused on the key areas for improvement. Suitable actions to address all areas for improvement are identified within the plan. The plan has appropriate milestones and appropriate interim success measures to help you to check progress.

You have revised the system used to check and record pupils' progress. You are now able to identify the progress of different groups and individual pupils more easily. Other senior leaders and subject leaders are using this information to successfully lead improvements in the subjects and aspects of the school's work for which they are responsible. As a result, teachers are clear about what is expected of them and how they will be held accountable for pupils' achievement.

There has been a very clear focus on quickly improving the quality of teaching. You have established a cycle of coaching and team-teaching so that all teachers can learn from the best practice in the school. Your records show that teaching has continued to improve since the previous monitoring inspection. This is confirmed by your latest assessment information which shows that across the school, rates of progress are accelerating and more pupils are working at the levels expected for their age. Nevertheless, you recognise that there is still more work to do to further improve the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement in all classes.

Leaders are working with parents and a range of external providers to improve attendance. Pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly and they

value the systems in place to reward good attendance. Although the current attendance figure is above the figure for the equivalent period in 2013, it is not yet in line with the national average for primary schools.

The new Chair of Governors has an accurate understanding of what the school needs to do to be 'good'. She brings a wide range of skills and has considerable educational expertise. She is well supported by the Vice Chair of Governors. The governing body has undertaken a skills audit and organised appropriate training so that new governors can quickly acquire the skills needed to support and challenge school leaders further. Documentation shows that governors ask searching questions about the quality of teaching and rates of pupils' progress. Reports show that governors are checking that the actions in the school improvement plan are helping to raise pupils' achievement.

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

You have received a good level of support and challenge from the local authority. This has helped you to focus on the main areas of weakness and take suitable action. You have organised an extensive programme of support for English and mathematics from your local school support network. This has contributed to the improvements in teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Mottram
Her Majesty's Inspector