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10 February 2017

Mr Tim Barnes  
Headteacher  
Shapla Primary School  
Wellclose Square  
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Dear Mr Barnes

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Shapla Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 1 February 2017, 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 November 2015. 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 last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, and your deputy headteacher. I also met with four governors and two representatives from the local authority. You accompanied me on a tour of the school which focused on gathering evidence from the writing and mathematics 'working walls'. I spoke informally to a small number of pupils in classes and around the school. During the meetings, we discussed the actions taken since the last inspection. I reviewed the school's updated action plan. Together, we scrutinised the school's analysis of pupils' 2016 test results and the progress of pupils currently in the school.

## **Context**

Since my last visit, there have been several changes to the staffing and responsibilities. These changes include the deputy headteacher taking on responsibilities for leading literacy and assessment. A new early years leader was appointed from within the school. To provide additional support for key stage 1, you appointed an additional member of staff. An interim special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) for one day a week has replaced the inclusion leader, who left in December 2016. Two parents have recently joined the governing body.

## **Main findings**

Since my previous visit in May 2016, school leaders and governors have acted swiftly to deal with the urgent concerns regarding how the school's governing body was able to hold leaders to account. The external review of the governing body was completed and provided governors with a clear direction. Consequently, the leadership of the school is now well placed to maintain a trajectory of improvement. The revised action plans are fit for purpose, identifying clear priorities and checks on the school's progress. You and the chair of the governing body meet regularly to share information about the school's performance and other leadership matters. As a result, this partnership is effective in ensuring that the school continues to make further improvements.

The committee structure of the governing body is robust, with two well-managed committees focusing on standards and resources. These committees provide the full governing body with the appropriate information, holding leaders to account.

Leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and what they need to do to sustain improvements. The monitoring of the quality of teaching is routine and robust. Teachers receive regular feedback on their practice. Leaders do not shy away from providing appropriate formal structures and monitoring where required. The school has developed the strengths reported on during the last monitoring inspection. The quality of teaching continues to be a priority for the school. The impact of leaders' work since the previous full inspection is paying off. Effective classroom organisation and high-quality displays of pupils' learning are evident throughout the school. Pupils' behaviour during lessons is responsive and focused on their learning.

The results from the 2016 key stage 1 assessments and key stage 2 tests were a mixed picture. Older pupils' progress in writing improved and was in line with the national average. However, pupils' levels of attainment were much lower than those seen nationally. In addition, no pupils reached the higher levels of attainment. This was especially the case in mathematics in key stage 2. Nonetheless, suitable strategies are in place to accelerate pupils' progress.

The school's assessment information suggests that a higher proportion of pupils, when compared with this time last year, are on track to achieve expected levels because they are making faster progress. Where pupils are at risk of slowing down, they receive additional support more swiftly than in previous years.

Results for phonics checks at the end of Year 1 dropped dramatically in 2016. These results have led to a complete overhaul of training for teachers and improvements in the teaching of phonics skills. Year 2 phonics checks and the assessments in reading, writing and mathematics were in line with or above the national average. However, as seen at the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was lower than the national average.

The outcomes for children at the end of Reception were a noticeable improvement. These results continue an upward trend, with the majority of children reaching good level of development. Consequently, they have been well prepared for their learning in Year 1.

### **External support**

The local authority continues to effectively monitor and challenge the school. The director of children's services issued a formal warning to the school, providing additional impetus to its improvement. Working closely with the local authority's literacy and mathematics consultants, school leaders are taking the necessary actions to improve pupils' learning and the quality of teaching. In addition, two local consultant headteachers have worked with the school's headteacher and deputy headteacher on a joint review of the school's progress through lesson observations and documentation. As a result, effective strategies are in place to improve teaching and learning, particularly around higher standards in writing, grammar, spelling and mathematics.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Tower Hamlets. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Seal

**Senior Her Majesty's Inspector**