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17 July 2013

Mr Kevin Corteen  
Headteacher  
Broad Oak Primary School  
Broad Oak Lane  
East Didsbury  
Manchester  
M20 5QB

Dear Mr Corteen

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Broad Oak Primary School, Manchester**

Following my visit to your school on 16 July 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. 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 May 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you, teachers, students, the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school action plan. I was also able to observe teaching and learning while visiting four classes as part of a learning walk with you. You provided me with a range of documentation including progress data, a selection of year 2 and year 5 pupils' work and information about the Governing Body.

### **Context**

Five new teachers have been appointed with effect from September 2013. Three of these teachers will replace those who have already left or who are leaving at the end of this academic year. The other two teachers will increase your staff numbers and will be used to strengthen teaching within the school. An induction programme has been put in place to ensure the new teachers have immediate impact on pupils' achievement.

## Main findings

You have made some quick wins which have resulted in pupils' progress being number one priority for Broad Oak School. For example the new 'RAG' system, a colour code operated by the pupils to show their level of understanding in lessons, is used as a method by teachers to judge which pupils need extra support or challenge. This means that activities are more closely matched to pupils' level of understanding and as a consequence they make the progress expected of them. You now need to monitor how well all teachers check that pupils' self-assessment of their learning is accurate and how well teachers provide opportunities for them to excel in their learning.

There has been an improvement in the quality of marking of pupils' work since the last inspection. This is because teachers regularly use marking to tell pupils what it is that they have done well, along with giving them suggestions on how to improve their work. As a result pupils are motivated to give their greatest effort in order to move to the next level. One Year 5 pupil had responded to a teacher's suggestion on how to improve a piece of work by writing 'I'll try my best'. While it is too early to see the full impact of this change, pupils' work and their responses to teachers' feedback show that some are starting to make more rapid progress. You now need to ensure this good practice takes place throughout the school so that marking is used consistently well to promote high expectations for all pupils.

Behaviour in the school has also improved because pupils feel the 'RAG' system has given them more responsibility for their own learning. Pupils of all ages have risen to the challenge of self-assessing the quality of their learning. Pupils are cooperative when working in pairs and small groups where they share ideas and listen to each other's point of view. Pupils also often show maturity in their choice of task in lessons, for example by selecting activities that will challenge them to improve. Pupils are enthusiastic about this new way of working, this signals a step change for the better in terms of their attitude to learning. It is important that choices made by pupils are monitored carefully by teachers so that pupils are not put off by activities that are either too easy or too hard.

The action plan that you produced in response to the last inspection provides a lot of detail about what needs to be done to move the school to good. The plan accurately reflects the main areas for improvement. However, it is too long for day to day use and it is not clear how some of the actions will impact on pupils' progress. The production of a document giving just actions to be taken and how these will impact on pupils' progress will help governors to systematically judge how well the school is making progress towards good.

Governors are proactive in their quest to back the school in its journey towards becoming a good school. For example they have taken part in an online review designed to help them better use their skills to support the school. They have also enlisted the support of two National Leaders of Governance (NLG) to assist with an external review of governance. This will help governors identify how they can contribute to an improvement in pupils' attainment and achievement. Results from these two actions are not yet available and therefore it is too early to judge the impact on how they will help the governors support the school in getting to good.

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:

- Produce a summary of the action plan in order that expected outcomes related to pupil progress are clear and can easily be used by governors to measure success.
- Ensure that whole school policies, such as that for marking, are consistently applied and used effectively to promote progress.
- Ensure teachers' implementation of the curriculum is creative and promotes pupils to be active and enthusiastic in their learning.
- Undertake an external review of governance to support the governing body in their desire to challenge leaders to improve the school to good.

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 made appropriate use of a range of external support. This has included a link with the Manchester Teaching School Alliance to provide training for staff who work with pupils who need extra help to improve their reading. You have also worked with Central 3, a group of good and outstanding schools, to share good practice in how reading and spelling are taught. As a result pupils are beginning to improve their ability to spell words correctly and many are enthusiastic readers. You have also worked with a good school from outside of Manchester to identify a more creative way of teaching. Although this new method is not yet formally in place, pupils are already benefitting from a teaching style which encourages them to be more responsible for their own learning. Accordingly, pupils are more enthusiastic about their learning and their behaviour has improved. You are continuing to increase the amount of external support the school receives, including from the local authority, in an attempt to ensure rapid progress to good. This support needs to be monitored in terms of impact on pupils' progress so that improvement is not slowed by ineffective contributions.

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

Yours sincerely

Drew Crawshaw

### **Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority - including where the school is an academy
- the academy chain where relevant
- Diocese - for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- The lead inspector.