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Mrs Anne Smith
Barry Primary School
Barry Road
Northampton
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Dear Mrs Smith

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Barry Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 21 November 2012, 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 September 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the senior and middle leaders, the school council, the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan, the minutes of the meetings of the governing body, lesson observation records and information relating to performance management were evaluated.

Context

There have been no changes in context since the inspection in September.

Main findings

The school has raised expectations by increasing its targets related to the progress all groups of pupils must make. An improvement plan has been produced that

reflects the outcomes of the inspection in September. The plan contains indicators that can be used to evaluate the progress the school is making in raising the overall level of progress. There is evidence that progress is being made improving teaching, for instance pupils appreciate the greater clarity in the feedback they receive and that more time is available so they can respond to this. Performance management is more robust in that all staff, including the headteacher, have challenging targets related to pupil progress.

The governing body is much clearer about its role in holding senior leaders to account. For instance they know the information that they require to judge the schools effectiveness and are insisting that this is provided by senior leaders. Senior leaders are also clear about the priorities that need to be addressed. For instance they have recognised that a lack of reliable historical information related to the quality of teaching and the progress of different groups of pupils makes it difficult to evaluate the current rate of improvement. The school is taking the correct action to address this weakness, for instance through the implementation of a more accurate approach to the assessment of pupils mathematical abilities.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- At the earliest opportunity ensure the assessments made about pupil progress are totally reliable.
- Improve the rigour in the arrangements for checking the school improvement plan by ensuring different personnel are taking responsibility for monitoring and evaluation and by including indicators that ensure the school is clear about progress made by different groups of pupils.
- Leaders, particularly the governing body and senior leadership, should accelerate the progress being made increasing the rigour of its monitoring and evaluation, through working more closely with partner schools.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school is beginning to benefit from a number of partnerships organised through the local authority and by an educational consultancy. Both of these providers of external support have an accurate awareness of the issues to be addressed in the school. Although it is too early to evaluate the impact of the peer coaching initiative staff are enthusiastic about this as a way of bringing about improvements to teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Kevin Sheldrick
Her Majesty's Inspector