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Sharon Barnes
Headteacher
Birds Bush Primary School
Birds Bush Road
Belgrave
Tamworth
B77 2NE

Dear Mrs Barnes

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

Following my visit to your school on 11 December 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 9 October 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated, classrooms visited and pupils were spoken with.

Context

There have been no important changes since the last inspection which judged the school to require improvement.

Main findings

The school plan has been updated to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Although all the areas for improvement are included, planning lacks clarity. It is not explicitly clear what the main priorities are for improving the school or how the required improvements will be brought about. For instance, the school's monitoring has identified that teachers do not have high enough

expectations of their most able pupils and often provide them with work they can already do rather than quickly moving them onto new and more difficult work. However, the school has not established precisely in its planning how it intends to help teachers do this better.



A system for tracking pupils' assessments is now in place and its reliability confirmed by some joint assessments with staff from outside the school. Assessment information is starting to be better used for deciding which pupils require additional catch-up support and for planning work of appropriate challenge in lessons. However, the school has not looked ahead to see if the progress pupils are currently making is good enough and whether the actions in the improvement plan will be sufficient to raise attainment to the national average.

Senior leaders have undertaken training to help them fulfil their roles but say they need more. They are uncertain about their role in improving the quality of teaching and in raising achievement in their subject areas. School leaders and members of the governing body have gaps in their understanding of the school's performance data. This meant they were unaware of the extent to which the school needs to improve and had not appreciated the urgency with which it needs to act.

Senior leaders are not yet taking sufficient action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection and plans are not sharply focused on rapidly bringing about improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- train senior leaders and members of the Governing Body in how to interpret school performance data and in how that data informs inspection judgements
- articulate clearly for staff in planning documents what the priorities are for improving the work of the school
- ensure teachers have higher expectations of the most able pupils and set work at an appropriate level for their capabilities
- provide coaching for senior leaders on their role in strengthening teaching and raising achievement.

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

External support

The local authority has provided training for teachers in using a more investigative and problem-solving approach to teaching mathematics. Access to advice from another headteacher has been facilitated and training for the Governing Body has been arranged.

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

Yours sincerely

David Anstead
Her Majesty's Inspector

