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7 February 2012

Brian Prebble
Headteacher
Rivermead Primary School
Loddon Bridge Road
Reading
RG5 4BS

Dear Mr Prebble

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

Following my visit to your school on 7 February 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 21-22 November 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, members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement action plans were evaluated. Other documents which showed the outcomes of monitoring by the headteacher and senior leaders were scrutinised.

Context

There have been no major changes to the context of the school since the inspection. One member of staff is on maternity leave and a new deputy headteacher will take-up post in April.

Main findings

The headteacher, senior leaders and Governing Body are fully aware of the significance of the findings of the last inspection and the need to address areas for

improvement as quickly as possible. School development plans clearly articulate the actions the school is taking to address the areas requiring improvement. However, plans would benefit from being more succinct and having sharper timescales and 'steps to success' in order to ensure that the momentum of improvement is maintained and the evaluation of the actions taken is more easily focussed.

There is a more robust approach in place to monitor the quality of teaching and check the progress of pupils. Key to this is the development of the role of the team leaders. They have had a variety of training and support and have successfully enhanced their role, fully taking on the challenge and responsibility for improving the work of their teams. Information from evaluating and monitoring the work of the school is increasingly used to focus discussion in team meetings.

The Governing Body has reviewed its practice and is much clearer about what it needs to do to improve the rigour of its work. There has been an increase in the amount of training its members are undertaking. This is beginning to improve the effectiveness of their challenge to the headteacher about the school's performance. The organisation of the Governing Body's business now distinguishes more clearly between procedural matters and other important issues about school performance.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take 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:

- Consolidate improvement plans and sharpen the timescales for completion of the steps to be taken to improve the school in the short medium and long term.
- Undertake a review of the effectiveness of the Governing Body following the implementation of new procedures.
- Involve HMI in a future event to work alongside the headteacher and team leaders while monitoring the quality of teaching.

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

External support

The headteacher has successfully used a wide range of external support to develop the expertise of the staff. This has included practitioners from outstanding schools and local authority personnel. Governors, teachers and teaching assistants have benefited from this support and training. It has helped the headteacher and senior leaders to validate their own judgements and increased the skills of other staff, for example to teach phonics (letters and their sounds) to pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Daniel Towl

Her Majesty's Inspector