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Alisdair Skinner
Headteacher
Wheatcroft Primary School
Stanstead Road
Hertford
SG13 7HQ

Dear Mr Skinner

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Wheatcroft Primary School, Hertford.

Following my visit to your school on 18 April 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 on 31 January 2013. 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, six members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan, the headteacher's most recent report to the governing body and a number of related documents were evaluated.

HMI invited the headteacher to conduct the joint observation of two lessons, during these lessons the inspector evaluated a sample of the pupils' work and the quality of marking. HMI provided professional feedback to both teachers.

Context

There have been no significant changes to staffing, provision, or organisation since the previous inspection. As one of the outcomes of the inspection, the governing body were required to seek an external review of governance from the National

College of School Leadership. The school has received notification that the National College does not have the capacity to provide this support in the time frame required; the college has directed the Chair of Governors to seek this support from the local authority.

Main findings

The school action plan provides an effective overview of whole school initiatives appropriately linked to the inspection report. Evidence of improvement is emerging and milestones record the impact already secured. Summaries of these evaluations are provided in the headteacher's report to the governing body.

The school is building a detailed assessment data base but does not yet present the information with sufficient clarity for governors to see the connection to the Ofsted criteria for good progress.

Having conducted the joint observation of two lessons with the headteacher, HMI led a discussion of the quality of teaching with the school's senior team. The views expressed by the headteacher concurred with the judgements given by the inspector. HMI led a discussion with the governing body on the ways governors might form a more accurate and independent view of the quality of teaching and pupil progress.

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:

- Use the recently published Ofsted videos of outstanding teaching as a basis for staff development.
- Use the places provided on the Ofsted 'English and Mathematics: getting to Good' courses facilitated by HMI to improve pupil progress.

HMI will seek an opportunity for the headteacher to observe one of his forthcoming inspections.

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

External support

The local authority have provided: the support of an experienced school improvement partner, committed to providing the support of a National Leader of Governance, and a full review of provision during the summer term.

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

Yours sincerely



David Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector