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14 May 2013

Mrs L Clements
Purbrook Infant School
Aldermoor Road East
Waterlooville
PO7 5NQ

Dear Mrs Clements

Monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to a school requiring improvement

Following my visit to your school on 14 May 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.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2013.

Evidence

During the visit I met with you and the deputy headteacher. We went for a tour of the school and visited classes in all year groups. I also met the leadership and learning partner from the local authority and three members of the governing body, including the Chair of Governors. I reviewed the post-Ofsted action plan and also looked at the school's self-evaluation summary, including the half-termly collection of results. I considered two reports from the local authority which evaluated teaching across the school and also provision and teaching in the early years.

Context

Since the inspection one teacher has left the school. One teacher has been absent long-term.

Main findings

Since the inspection, you have reviewed your school improvement plan and developed the post-Ofsted action plan, with advice from the local authority. The action plan is detailed and reflective, showing your deep thinking about why the school requires improvement. However, it needs a sharper focus on the specific areas identified during the previous inspection. Senior leaders, governors and middle leaders have been involved in the creation of the action plan, but it has not been shared with all staff.

Following the inspection, you have rightly focused on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, particularly in writing and mathematics. You have observed teaching and looked at the quality of teachers' planning and pupils' work. There is evidence from your records of lesson observations that teaching is improving. You and the deputy headteacher have made sure that teachers are making better use of their planning and preparation time to discuss pupils' progress and share good practice. Senior and middle leaders need to check that time devoted to planning is having the required impact on pupil progress.

You have provided appropriate training for staff in using better questioning in lessons. You are following this up by ensuring that every teacher has a personal target for their use of questioning and that teaching assistants have a performance management target that relates to the quality of their questioning. Useful displays around the school reinforce the focus on questioning and provide interesting opportunities for pupils to respond or add questions of their own.

Your half-termly collection of pupils' results demonstrates that results are showing improvement, although there are still concerns about progress in mathematics and writing for some groups of pupils. You have made these areas a priority and are doing more focused work on planning and assessment. You have made sure that teachers are judging the levels of pupils' work accurately by providing time to check results with teachers from other schools. Teachers are making better use of pupils' progress data and come to pupil progress meetings more prepared.

You have made some changes to the roles and responsibilities of key staff, in order to tackle urgent areas for improvement and build on existing leadership capacity. You are making sure that skilled teachers and leaders are focused on the areas of greatest need. Some middle leaders are beginning to develop more expertise in monitoring progress and the quality of teaching. You have employed an additional teacher to support with writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils of lower ability in Year 2 are catching up.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They support staff well and also want to drive up standards. They have focused their

questions on the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Governors visit lessons and are gaining more understanding of good learning and progress.

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, I recommend that further action is taken to:

- share a briefer and more focused action plan with all staff
- ensure that information about pupil progress is analysed in detail, identifying pupils who need to catch up
- ensure that new approaches to lesson planning and assessment are followed up and checked consistently by middle and senior leaders.

My next visit in the autumn term will include a review of the impact of middle leadership on teaching and pupil progress.

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

External support

The school benefits from a range of support from the local authority, including the specialist advisor for early years and English and mathematics subject advisors. The leadership and learning partner will be undertaking a review of teaching and progress in the new term. Middle leaders are about to start a leadership programme, led by the local authority. I recommend that this level of support continues. School leaders need to develop consistent approaches to checking on pupil progress and the quality of teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Janet Pearce
Her Majesty's Inspector