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Mr Ben Crump
Headteacher
Coughton CofE Primary School
Coughton Lane
Alcester
Warwickshire
B49 5HN

Dear Mr Crump

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Coughton CofE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 26 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 April 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, the governing body and a senior primary advisor from the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated. A tour of the school was undertaken with you and the assistant headteacher. The findings of school and governor monitoring activities and the performance management of staff were discussed.

Context

There have been no significant contextual changes within the school since the section 5 inspection.

Main findings

The school has produced an action plan which makes clear its aims and priorities. The arrangements for monitoring and the timescales to work to are appropriately specific. Targets for staff are now better linked to school improvement and pupil progress. You, your senior leaders and governors are exceptionally well focussed. You are rapidly developing and organising robust procedures for checking the work of the school. This has improved consistency in the quality of teaching and on raising pupils' achievement. There is still more to do on developing subject leadership, particularly in literacy and mathematics, to ensure that action plans for these subjects link closely to the milestones in the school action plan. You have rightly identified the need for pupils to be secure in using mathematical vocabulary, and to have regular opportunities for practising their mathematical skills across other subjects. The governing body is keen to undertake further training to help them to fully understand their monitoring role and how best to organise this.

School monitoring indicates that teaching is now consistently good. There has been a drive on improving pupils' writing. A new marking policy and new target cards for pupils have provided a useful framework for marking. Teachers are more explicit in their feedback to pupils; so that they are clear how they can improve their work and they are given time to address this. You have started to analyse the impact of extra support and interventions used with pupils who require additional help or challenge. However, this information has not been pulled together in a way that enables school leaders and governors to easily assess whether the school is making best use of resources, including staff and the additional 'pupil premium' funding. You and the governing body are committed to further developing their communication with stakeholders, including parents and carers, during the forthcoming staffing and leadership changes and on the school's journey to good.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- provide opportunities for pupils to increase their mathematical vocabulary and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subject areas
- ensure subject leaders develop their own action plans which underpin the school's action plan
- analyse the impact of support and intervention for any pupils eligible for the 'pupil premium' or who are identified as having additional needs succinctly, so that provision can be discussed by all school leaders and acted upon
- develop communication and consultation with stakeholders, and the school's partnership with parents and carers
- develop the role of governing body through action planning which links to wider school improvement planning, and includes checking school procedures for setting staff targets and the use of 'pupil premium' funding.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school is drawing effectively on a range of external support. Staff are making good use of another local school to help them in their journey to good. The local authority gave input to school action planning and is checking upon the school's progress at regular intervals. It provided advice to the governing body on commissioning the recent external review of governance, which has more tightly focussed the governing body's work. The review has helped to move forward the governors' role in school improvement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Education Director for the Coventry Diocese and the Director of Children's Services for Warwickshire.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector