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11 July 2013

Tanya Dakin
Headteacher
Auriol Junior School
Vale Road
Epson
Surrey
KT19 0PJ

Dear Mrs Dakin

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Auriol Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 11 July 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 May 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and another senior leader, four year group leaders, a representative of the local authority and the Chair of the Governing Body plus two other governors to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's strategic action plan was evaluated and I looked at documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work. I also accompanied you on a walk around the school visiting a number of classrooms.

Context

Since the previous inspection the governing body has been reconstituted. The number of governors on the governing body has been reduced from 18 to 11. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, in post at the time of the previous

inspection, have resigned and been replaced. The new Chair of the Governing Body is a local authority advanced skills governor. One part-time member of teaching staff has left the school.

Main findings

You have reacted very positively to the previous inspection report and are providing the school with clear and effective leadership. There is a positive climate within the school and all senior and middle leaders spoken to were committed to working towards the school being judged good as quickly as possible. You have made good use of the recommendations in the previous inspection report to rewrite the school's strategic action plan. This plan identifies some sensible and well-targeted activities to drive forward improvements in teaching and leadership. Your ambition is clear in the challenging targets that have been set for specific dates in the future. The process of monitoring the progress of the school towards these targets is clear; however, the role of governors in evaluating the impact of actions taken has not been sufficiently clarified in the plan.

You have established a firm foundation to improve teaching. The quality of teaching is being monitored regularly and robustly and teachers are being provided with appropriate training to improve their practice. The school's 'feedback and marking' policy has been sensibly rewritten. Regular monitoring of teachers' written comments to pupils, and their response is beginning to ensure good practice is more consistent across the school. All pupils have been provided with long-term targets in mathematics and writing; however, senior leaders recognise that more work needs to be done to ensure that pupils fully understand how to use these targets to improve their learning.

The role of middle leaders is being developed well. They are becoming more involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their subject areas. They are also becoming increasingly involved in raising expectations in the school and increasingly effective in holding individual teachers to account for pupil's progress.

The local authority has carried out a review of governance and made a number of sensible recommendations to improve its effectiveness. The very recently reconstituted governing body is ambitious for the school and is beginning to develop its expertise through appropriate training. The governing body now receives detailed information from the headteacher regarding pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in the school. Systems to evaluate this information and provide an appropriate level of challenge are improving but at an early stage of development.

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:

- strengthen the school's strategic action plan so that the role of governors in evaluating the impact of actions to improve the school to good are sufficiently clear.

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 local authority has provided a broad range of effective support to the school. For example, support provided for special educational needs, assessment, subject leadership and governance is beginning to have a positive impact on school improvement. Good procedures are in place for the local authority to monitor the implementation and impact of the school's strategic action plan.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Sanderson
Her Majesty's Inspector