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15 July 2013

Mrs Sandie Lineton
The Headteacher
Kings Meadow Primary School and Early Years Education Centre
Meadow Lane
Ainsdale
Southport
Merseyside
PR8 3RS

Dear Mrs Lineton

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kings Meadow Primary School and Early Years Education Centre

Following the visit to your school on 15 July, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report my findings. 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, I met with you, other school leaders, pupils, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school development plans. You and I visited each classroom to meet pupils and staff and look at the changes you have made to the school environment, for example the new safety fencing and the plans for an improved outdoor area to encourage learning. I looked at the school's self-evaluation report for this year; curriculum action plans for next year; the reports from the local authority and lesson observations completed since the last inspection. Your monitoring records showed evidence of improved teaching of mathematics and literacy.

Main findings

You, the governors and staff have responded well to the judgement of the previous inspection and are determined to continue to work together to ensure the school is good. The development plan focuses clearly on the areas for improvement identified in the recent inspection. However, the plan lacks clarity in places and could be modified to prioritise actions and state how the impact of these will be evaluated to ensure progress for pupils is maintained.

You are determined to strengthen the quality of teaching and your focus on mathematics across the school has already shown impact on the pupils' progress. The pupils recognise their progress and said they find the subject more interesting. New resources for improving mathematics are being used and middle and high ability pupils are more suitably challenged and motivated. Mathematics is also taught through other subjects, for example during 'Money skills week' pupils did food tasting to compare brand prices. The results for Year 6 pupils show girls are more in line with boys. The school has worked effectively to raise the challenge for girls to narrow the gaps in learning between them and the boys. Literacy targets are more challenging, linked within topic work, and assessed on a weekly basis. Staff share knowledge and skills and have received useful training during a 'literacy surgery' provided by a local authority intervention officer.

You have introduced better processes to track and measure the impact of extra support for pupils: as a result staff are able to share information about progress and challenge pupils to reach their potential. The revised marking policy helps pupils to understand how they can improve their work. Pupils in years 5 and 6 can identify their level of progress and say they are being challenged more in lessons. They say that they enjoy learning and know their targets. Pupils think that the school is getting better and are motivated to make good progress.

Staff think the professional development they have received has been useful and are determined to improve the quality of teaching. Training and visits to other schools have enabled staff to highlight where they will make changes to their teaching next term: for example introducing phonics work earlier to children and improving their monitoring of pupil progress. Performance management systems are now firmly in place and an audit of staff skills has enabled you to pinpoint appropriate development needs. You have increased the leadership opportunities for your staff and they are enthusiastic about the direction the school is taking. They appreciate the level of responsibility they are given and feel empowered to drive the school forward.

The governing body has produced an appropriate action plan to formalise its structure and procedures following an external review of governance and is committed to supporting and challenging the school leadership team.

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:

- review the school development plan to ensure that it has a clearer focus and allows the staff taking responsibility for new areas of work to give a termly progress report
- strengthen the way in which governors monitor the performance of the school.

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

You are making good use of the support provided by the local authority prior to, and following, the recent inspection. The local authority provides good links with other schools and offers specific advice to help you improve teaching and learning; improve management skills and also support the governing body. Further leadership training is planned for the middle leaders next term and support has also been given to ensure you are fully staffed next year. Your school improvement advisor has confidence in the school improving quickly.

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

Yours sincerely

Christina McIntosh

Her Majesty's Inspector