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Lesley Crockett and Melanie Carruthers
Co-Headteachers
Badgemore Primary School
Hop Gardens
Henley-on-Thames
RG9 2HL

Dear Mrs Crockett and Mrs Carruthers

Following my visit to your school on 27 September 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 June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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:

- press on with the governing body's plans to restructure the leadership of the school
- ensure that teaching and pupils' work is monitored regularly and that areas for development lead to clear evaluative written outcomes and short-term improvement targets, where necessary for individual teachers
- make more use of any local outstanding practice and expertise to gather information and further ideas that could be used to improve practice
- tighten up on success criteria in the improvement plans so that there is a clearer view about how the school will judge itself to be good or outstanding.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement action plans were evaluated. Short visits were made to all classrooms.

Context

Since the last inspection three new teachers have been appointed and there has been a change in the Chair of the Governing Body.

Main findings

Pupils now have more information about their targets and therefore a better understanding about what it is they need to improve. Teachers' lesson planning too is identifying more clearly different expectations for pupils of varying ability. There are some signs that pupils' progress is improving.

At the time of this visit there was only limited information about improvements in the quality of teaching. Better use is now made of staff expertise, including the headteachers, to ensure that there is more targeted teaching to improve the progress of different groups of pupils. There is a greater awareness of the requirement to stretch pupils who are more able. However, teaching is not yet consistently good across the school.

Pupils' phonic knowledge, understanding letters and their sounds, has improved. Pupils who repeated their Year 1 national phonic test improved their scores in Year 2. Steps have also been taken to improve the way pupils are taught to develop their writing skills and tackle a wider range of mathematical problems. It is too early to see the impact of these changes on pupils' achievements.

The headteachers have identified the right areas of the school's work to concentrate on. The improvement plan, while having some key dates and success criteria, still lacks some detail about what is to be achieved and what success will look like in the short and medium term. Teachers have had the chance to work alongside the headteachers and watch each other teach but have not yet visited outstanding practitioners in other schools to broaden their knowledge.

The governing body commissioned an external review of its effectiveness and has acted on its findings. The governing body is very well led by the new Chair and has taken incisive and appropriate action to simplify and strengthen the leadership structure of the school. The expertise of the governing body has been suitably extended through the addition of new members. Governors have worked closely

with the local authority in order to expedite changes and deal with complex staffing matters. They are now actively developing new ways to collect more first-hand information about the school so that they can increase their knowledge and ask informed questions about how well pupils are doing.

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 good strategic support and advice to the governing body on personnel issues. They have also supported curriculum development in English and mathematics, moderated teachers' assessment of pupils' writing and helped to 'sharpen up' the action plans for improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Daniel Towl
Her Majesty's Inspector