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Iain Owens
Headteacher
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Wingfield Street
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Dear Mr Owens

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bungay Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 27 April 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 January 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At the previous section 5 inspection in January 2013 the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

They recognise the impact of the recent inspection outcomes and have successfully galvanised staff to maintain the momentum of school improvement. The school should take further action to:

- Support teachers and middle leaders to focus on the key elements of lessons that improve pupils' achievement. This includes explicitly demonstrating what pupils can achieve, particularly the most able, by providing examples of work that illustrate all levels of subject skill acquisition and mastery.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan, subject action plans, in-school attainment data, attendance data and minutes of pupil premium meetings, were evaluated. We visited every class, including the nurture provisions and I scrutinised teachers' planning, pupils' work books, and I spoke to pupils. I reviewed the single central record.

Context

Since the previous inspection a member of teaching staff has returned to the school on a part-time basis. A mathematics specialist teacher has been appointed, although he is not scheduled to start until September 2015.

Main findings

You and your senior team have an accurate picture of the actions needed to improve outcomes for pupils at the school, based on the findings of the previous inspection. These are reflected clearly in the school improvement plan and middle leaders' action plans. Senior leaders and the governing body monitor the impact of improvements following a rigorous schedule, including regular work sampling, lesson observations and pupil progress meetings. All teaching staff are involved in a supportive coaching programme to improve elements of their practice, such as teaching group reading and using mathematics resources. The senior team is aware that they need to be mindful not to introduce too many developmental initiatives for staff as this can dilute their impact.

Displays around the school are used to celebrate pupils' achievements and promote learning. They are maintained to a high standard and reflect the expectation the school has for presentation. Work in books is generally neat and handwriting is joined and regular. Pupils in all classes are able to describe how they use their teachers' marking to improve their work and know their next steps based on targets in their books. The quality of marking is consistent throughout the school. These observations demonstrate that the school has made good progress since the inspection.

School leaders are aware of the necessity to improve pupils' attainment and progress rapidly particularly for disadvantaged pupils. The need for better results is most apparent in Key Stage 2 where intervention programmes and increased teaching and teaching support provision is in place. In-school data indicates that this is having a positive impact on results throughout the majority of year groups, and that predicted results are realistic. Where tracking does not demonstrate the level of improvement expected this needs to be analysed in more detail and alternative approaches adopted; senior leaders are aware of this.

The school has been proactive in supporting pupils with behavioural and emotional needs. The establishment of nurture classrooms has meant that pupils' social and emotional needs are addressed and they are better equipped to learn. There are robust consequence and rewards systems in place and pupils are able to describe them and the positive impact they have had on overall behaviour. Attendance is continuing to improve, although it remains below the national average. The strategies used by the deputy headteacher to improve attendance are having an impact, but the expectation remains that attendance should be above national.

The improvement in the quality of teaching needs to continue and good practice should be modelled by senior leaders. As teachers become aware of the full abilities of their pupils, their expectations will increase and attainment and progress will improve. This cycle of professional development is in place and recent lesson observations indicate that it is having an impact on pupils' achievement.

Ofsted will carry out further monitoring inspections and provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school has developed a strong working relationship with the local authority. Their dedicated school improvement partner knows the school well and makes regular visits providing suitable guidance, support and challenge. A bid has been submitted to the local teaching school which will extend the training opportunities offered to the school. The local authority will be visiting the school shortly to ensure that the expected standards in safeguarding are met.

Senior leaders are working as part of a local Ofsted triad project and have formed an informal educational network with several other local schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Deborah Pargeter
Associate Inspector