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15 December 2016

Mr John Read
Lyneham Primary School
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Dear Mr Read

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lyneham Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 29 November 2016, 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 February 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

At the section 5 inspection before the one in February 2016, the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- strengthen leadership to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of leaders new to their roles are fully embedded
- implement robust systems to check regularly on teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' progress so that the areas where pupils still underperform are tackled successfully
- ensure that milestones within the school action plan are strengthened so that governors can precisely hold leaders to account for tackling required improvements within set short-term timescales
- leaders provide clarity of communication with staff so that they know exactly

what is needed to improve teaching, learning and assessment so that outcomes are good, particularly in writing

- insist that all lessons start promptly and that learning time is not wasted.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school's improvement plan. You accompanied me on short visits to lessons and we scrutinised some examples of pupils' work. I talked with pupils in lessons and around the school and also talked to parents at the beginning of the school day. I met with the transition coordinator and four staff. Together, we reviewed school monitoring documents such as the checks you have conducted on teaching and learning. I met with one of the designated safeguarding leaders and reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Main findings

There has been considerable turnover of staff since the previous inspection. This has affected the school's improvement journey. As headteacher, you have a clear vision for the future and have worked hard to secure staffing for the school. You have been determined in your effort to improve communication with parents. I spoke to a number of parents during my visit and most confirmed that communication is improving quickly.

However, senior leaders' work has not been adequately focused on checking pupils' progress. Leaders are not yet working strategically to improve pupils' outcomes across the school. Lines of accountability are not yet secure. Consequently, some areas for development have not been tackled quickly enough.

You have put in place a new leadership structure since September 2016. Two assistant headteachers have joined the senior leadership team. Leaders' job descriptions have been written and roles and responsibilities are clear. However, this work is very recent and more needs to be done to ensure that leaders fully understand their roles. As yet, they do not hold teachers to account for ensuring that the quality of teaching is securely good so that pupils' prior underachievement is eradicated quickly.

You and your senior leaders do not pay sufficient attention to evaluating pupils' progress, including the most able pupils' progress. Staff do not receive precise enough information about what they need to do to adapt or change their practice. Consequently, pupils' progress is not rapid enough because they do not always get sufficient exposure to the right work.

You and other senior leaders have not ensured that teachers use assessment information effectively to provide work that is matched to pupils' needs. Leaders

have not conducted important meetings with teachers to review pupils' performance. As a result, leaders do not have a precise enough understanding of how pupils are progressing from their different starting points. Work in books remains too variable.

One successful strategy has been to improve teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics. Staff training has resulted in greater consistency in the teaching of reasoning and problem-solving across the school. These aspects are beginning to develop well. However, not all teachers plan work that helps pupils to move on because they do not correctly identify and tackle gaps in pupils' learning. Moreover, teachers do not ensure that the work they provide builds on what pupils can do, know, and understand. Consequently, some pupils' learning in mathematics is hindered. Pupils' progress across classes and year groups remains inconsistent.

You have reorganised classes so that pupils are working in single year groups. Teachers confirm that this has helped them plan to meet expectations of the national curriculum. However, inspection evidence confirms that teachers' expectations are not uniformly high because they do not consistently use assessment information well.

Some lessons do not start promptly and transitions between activities can be too slow. In some classes, pupils do not have good attitudes towards learning. Some pupils sit eagerly waiting to learn but others find it difficult to deal with the inconsistent expectations set for them and their concentration falters. Teachers do not respond quickly enough. Consequently, pupils' enthusiasm to learn and levels of confidence are variable.

You know that teaching does not challenge the most able pupils to achieve the standards of which they are capable. You have plans in place but these are in their infancy. To date, there has been limited monitoring of these pupils' progress. Greater urgency is required to raise teachers' expectations in all subjects, particularly in providing teaching that will enable a greater proportion of pupils to meet and exceed national expectations. Pupils' work shows that you are further forward in mathematics than in writing. Although you have organised more time for pupils to develop their writing, this is not yet bringing about the quality of work required for all pupils to make good progress from their different starting points.

Governors have developed their strategic involvement in the life of the school. They have actively engaged in external training and guidance from the local authority. Governors have usefully altered their committee structure to reflect the school's priorities for improvement and their visits review progress against these priorities. However, because the milestones in the improvement plan are not precise enough, governors have not been able to hold the school to account for keeping to time for the agreed actions. Governors know that this needs to be rectified urgently and they have the capacity to do this.

Governors have been focused on ensuring that pupil premium funding is allocated and used productively. Increasingly, they challenge leaders on how this funding is spent and have made sure that a review statement is on the school's website.

The appointment of a transition leader to improve the welfare and personal development of service pupils is beginning to take hold. Better systems are forming for inward and outwardly mobile pupils. More precise teachers' assessment on entry is helping these pupils settle into the school more quickly than previously. The transition leader also supports outgoing pupils by helping them prepare for their new school. Increased links with the Ministry of Defence welfare team are in place. Parents also report that transition is better this year.

The school environment is more vibrant and classroom displays now value pupils' learning. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

External support

The local authority has completed regular visits and meetings and provided a comprehensive menu of focused support. However, its impact in securing robust leadership systems to support monitoring and evaluation is more limited. Consequently, improvements have not happened quickly enough. Improvements in pupils' progress and attainment are not yet secure.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wiltshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Carrington
Her Majesty's Inspector