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Mr M Lambert
Wallop Primary School
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Dear Mr Lambert

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Wallop Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12 May 2017, 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.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- sharpen the analysis of pupils' progress to provide greater clarity about the attainment and progress of individuals and groups of pupils
- closely monitor the achievement of the most able pupils and provide further challenge to enable them to achieve a greater depth of understanding and reach high standards.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you; your deputy headteacher; the English and mathematics subject leaders; your early years leader; three members of the governing body, including 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 was evaluated. A range of documents were scrutinised, including performance management information, governing body minutes and local authority visit notes. I also had a meeting with a group of pupils.

Context

Since the previous inspection, class structures have been reorganised so that three classes are now taught as mixed-age classes. The phase leader posts have been removed. Subject leaders' roles and responsibilities have been established. One teacher has left and one teacher has joined the school.

Main findings

School leaders and governors have taken decisive action to improve the quality of teaching across the school. Regular monitoring of the quality of teaching through lesson observations and short visits to classrooms has raised expectations and resulted in a greater consistency of provision across the school. School leaders check the progress that pupils make during lessons and use a range of evidence such as lesson observations, the quality of teachers' planning, the scrutiny of pupils' work and information on pupils' achievements to judge the quality of teaching. Staff training has focused on ensuring that teachers and learning support assistants guide pupils effectively to focus on their next steps in learning.

The school development plan is a useful document to support school improvement. It is suitably focused on the most important aspects identified for improvement at the previous inspection. Roles and responsibilities are set out clearly and helpful milestones enable school leaders and governors to check on the progress towards achieving the desired outcome for pupils.

At the end of 2016, almost all children in the early years were well prepared for the start of Year 1. All children reached the expected standard in reading and mathematics and all boys achieved the expected standard in writing. The proportion of girls achieving the expected standard in writing was above the national average. Provision in the early years has improved. School leaders have provided a secure, designated outside area for children to explore and learn. Children's progress is carefully monitored and a recent visit by the local authority to check the school's judgements showed that the early years team accurately assess children's learning. The needs and interests of children are carefully taken into account when planning activities. This is having a positive impact on children's learning and engagement.

In 2016, outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 2 were above the national average in reading and mathematics, although middle-ability pupils and boys did less well than similar pupils nationally. Outcomes in writing for Year 2 pupils were below the national average. School leaders have taken action to address this. The English subject leader is checking pupils' progress across the school by scrutinising their work and providing helpful feedback to teachers to guide them to increase rates of pupils' progress. Teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces of work. Pupils are also encouraged to use their writing skills in other subjects.

Effective action has been taken to increase the skills of teachers and learning support assistants to enable them to develop pupils' reading skills more effectively. Greater attention has been given to support pupils' understanding of inference and prediction and enable pupils to explain and discuss their reading.

The mathematics subject leader is providing effective support to teachers. Useful information is reported to governors to ensure that they have a good understanding of the improvements across the school in mathematics. There has been a greater focus on improving pupils' reasoning skills. Teachers and learning support assistants have received additional training to teach reasoning skills. Pupils are now using their reasoning skills more effectively and applying their mathematical skills in other subjects.

A significant proportion of pupils are from service families and many children start school during the school year. School leaders are carefully checking the achievement of these pupils when they begin at the school. This supports teachers to plan tasks and activities that are well-matched to pupils' starting points. Senior leaders are closely monitoring their progress. They identify additional support, where necessary, to enable these pupils to settle quickly and, if necessary, catch up in their learning.

Learning support assistants are providing more effective support to different groups of pupils. Additional training has been put in place to improve the questioning skills of learning support assistants. Helpful prompts and examples have been provided for them to ensure that they ask pupils suitably open-ended questions during lessons. This enables pupils to develop their thinking and helps them to complete their work more independently and successfully.

Senior leaders and governors have strengthened assessment procedures. They regularly check on the progress of different groups of pupils. Teachers have a good understanding of the pupils who are on track to achieve the expected standard at the end of each key stage. They know pupils' starting points and the next steps in their learning. Effective action is being taken to provide additional support for pupils whose progress is slower than expected. However, the analysis of the progress information is not yet sharp enough. All staff and governors would benefit from having a more detailed evaluation of the trends of progress over time, including for

the most able pupils. School leaders should ensure that further challenge for the most able pupils is provided to increase the proportion of pupils who reach higher standards and develop a greater depth of understanding.

External support

The local authority has provided a wide range of support for the school. At the time of the previous inspection, the school received a high level of support. Since September 2016, the level of support has reduced to a medium level, which reflects school leaders' capacity to bring about further improvement more independently. Teachers and leaders have benefited from the support of the English and mathematics advisers and the early years and special educational needs consultants.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector