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5 December 2012

Mr T Verity (partnership headteacher)
Mrs J Grimble (acting headteacher)
Spalding Primary School
Woolram Wygate
Spalding
PE11 1PB

Dear Mr Verity and Mrs Grimble

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Spalding Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 4 December 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on 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 September 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the partnership headteacher, the acting headteacher, three senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated.

Context

Following the inspection, the headteacher resigned her post. Since then the school has been led by the partnership headteacher alongside the acting headteacher. From January 2013 these roles will be formalised as 'executive headteacher' and 'head of school'. There have been no other significant staff changes since the inspection.

Main findings

Governors and some staff were initially surprised by the inspection outcomes, but accept now that the findings were correct. This acceptance has enabled staff and

governors to embrace the changes introduced by the new leadership. The partnership headteacher has been unequivocal in establishing his expectations so that staff know what needs to improve and how they can contribute to this improvement. Swift action has been taken to:

- address weakness in teaching
- strengthen leadership at all levels
- develop the role of governors.

The well-structured action plan addresses the key priorities and involves staff and governors. In addition, the partnership headteacher's initial evaluation highlighted other aspects that needed strengthening, such as provision for pupils with special educational needs. Since the inspection there has been evident improvement in the learning environment, the quality of lesson planning and teachers' marking. Effective systems have been introduced so that senior leaders can check the impact of these improvements and provide suitable support and training for staff.

Communication has been improved so that parents and governors are better informed. Governors have a much clearer understanding of their role and how to fulfil it. Regular visits, sharply focused reports and helpful training have given them a clear insight into the school's performance and how they should be holding senior leaders to account, although it is too early to see the impact of this hard work

Senior leaders and governors are taking swift and effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to develop the role of governors and support the newly appointed head of school.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority has kept a close eye on the school and has, in recent years, provided suitable challenge and support. Following the recent inspection, excellent support was arranged from an outstanding local school, and this has been formalised as a two-year collaborative partnership. In addition, external consultants have provided helpful training and guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, for governors and for the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.

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

Yours sincerely

Paul Brooker
Her Majesty's Inspector