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Mr Lee Ashton
Headteacher
Lower Kersal Community Primary School
St Aidan's Grove
Salford
Greater Manchester
M7 3TN

Dear Mr Ashton

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

Following my visit to your school on 18 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 October 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, governors, a group of pupils and a representative of the local authority (LA). The inspector evaluated a range of documentation including: the school improvement plan; the tracking of pupils' progress, monitoring reports and records of lesson observations. In addition, the headteacher took the HMI on a tour of the school to look at teaching and the changes made to provision since the last inspection.

Context

There have been no significant changes to staff or the school's organisation since the inspection.

Main findings

Following the October inspection, senior leaders and governors have accepted that the priorities identified to improve the school are the right ones. As a result, they have responded with suitable urgency and have taken appropriate action to lay the foundations for improvements in leadership and in pupils' learning.

Teachers have benefitted from the support provided by the school's improvement partner and consultants. Lesson planning has been revised alongside a review of subjects and the coverage of skills. Strategies to improve teaching and learning are gathering pace with the increased focus on coaching and the sharing of good practice.

The school improvement plan has been realigned since the inspection to reflect the areas for improvement. Clear priorities are in place to drive the school forward. Nevertheless, some of the targets and criteria for measuring success are not as sharp as they could be. This makes it difficult for leaders, including the governing body, to judge the impact of actions taken over-time.

Senior leaders are ambitious and correctly recognise that the next challenge is to press on with their plans to improve accountability by establishing a clear pattern for pupil progress meetings and to seek further clarification with teachers on what constitutes effective practice in pupils' learning.

Governors are committed to see the school move forward and are keen to access further training and support. Increasingly they are more aware of what goes on in school and in understanding the links between pupils' progress and the quality of provision. There is still further work to be done to increase their confidence to act as a critical friend to the school and hold senior leaders to account.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- sharpen measurable success criteria and targets in the school improvement plan.

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

External support

The support for the school from the LA is well tailored to the school's most urgent priorities and is helping to improve the quality of teaching and strengthen leadership. The LA is committed to developing the skills of staff and governors at all levels to enable them to monitor the quality of provision and use the outcomes of this to inform strategies for further improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Steve Isherwood

Her Majesty's Inspector