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11 January 2013

Andrew Edwards
Headteacher
Bilton CofE Junior School
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Dear Mr Edwards

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Bilton CofE Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 10 January 2013, 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 November 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, five members of the Governing Body including the Chair of Governors and a learning improvement officer from the local authority. The school learning improvement plan was evaluated. A tour of the school was undertaken with the headteacher and deputy headteacher and pupils' work in books was sampled across all year groups. The management of the performance of staff in raising progress and achievement was discussed.

Context

There have been no significant contextual changes within the school since the section 5 inspection which judged the school to require improvement. The acting deputy headteacher has been permanently appointed to the post and is non-

classroom based from this term. Pupils are no longer placed in sets linked to ability for literacy or numeracy following the last inspection.

Main findings

Work undertaken to improve the school is ambitious and appropriately prioritised. Staff and members of the Governing Body have worked well as a team. They are determined to strengthen the school and ensure the education which each pupil receives is as good as it can be. School leaders are supporting staff well and are working hard to develop a more consistent approach to teaching, including planning, and the marking of pupils' work.

School leaders and governors have worked well together to set rigorous performance targets for teachers and leaders. There are specific checks in place to determine whether the staff are on course to achieve the personal and school targets which have been set. Governors are clear about the school's priorities for improvement and where standards must improve. There is a good understanding of their responsibilities and of the need to make secure and rapid progress. Their monitoring activities are closely aligned to points for improvement raised at the last inspection. Governors have been involved in school improvement planning, which is manageable and details how governors will check on the school's progress. The school recognises that documentation does not specifically identify the work it has begun and is still to do to develop the links with pupils' parents and carers, including the role of the newly appointed family liaison ambassador. There are inconsistencies in the presentation of pupils' work, in the quality of their writing, and in teachers' marking.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take 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 high quality marking in mathematics, giving clear instructions and allowing pupils more time to respond to teachers' comments, checking their learning is secure before moving on
- ensure there is greater consistency in expectations for pupils' presentation of work, particularly in mathematics books, and ensure that pupils undertake sufficient independent work during each lesson
- check that expectations for the quality of pupils' writing established in literacy lessons are maintained when pupils are writing in other subject lessons
- update the school improvement plan to include strategies designed to strengthen links with parents and carers in all of the aspects of its work
- schedule another visit to the school by HMI to monitor progress

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

External support

The school is drawing effectively on a range of external support. Staff are working well with improvement resources provided through the Diocese. This is helping those with special responsibilities lead aspects of the schools work strongly and confidently. The local authority has provided useful support in reviewing school improvement documentation and action plans. The school has brokered their own external consultants and teachers with advanced skills who have begun to have a positive impact on teaching and learning across the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector