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14 January 2013

Mrs F Godfrey
Headteacher
Leedon Lower School
Highfield Road
Leighton Buzzard
LU7 3LZ

Dear Mrs Godfrey

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

Following my visit to your school on 11 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 14 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 and middle leaders, representatives from the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a commissioned school improvement professional. The school improvement plan was evaluated alongside a range of other self-evaluation and monitoring documents.

Context

There have been no changes to the staffing since the previous inspection. There are currently two vacancies on the governing body.

Main findings

A detailed action plan provides an appropriate framework for school improvement. Responsibilities are clearly identified within specific timescales to facilitate school

improvement. However, the absence of specific targets linked to pupil performance means that the school cannot effectively measure its success.

Discussions with senior and middle leaders confirm a much sharper focus on improving the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils in all classes. The effective identification of those pupils who are currently underperforming provides a baseline to target specific resources and tailor teaching more closely to their individual needs. All staff with a leadership role participate in the monitoring of learning activity within their areas of responsibility. Future training is planned to give all middle leaders the skills to observe lessons in order that they may play a greater role in monitoring pupil progress and teacher performance. A National Leadership governor has worked closely with the governing body to provide a specific training programme for all governors in the use of data and monitoring the work of the school.

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 recommend that further action is taken to:

- ensure that targets within the action plan are sufficiently challenging to raise standards further in English and mathematics

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection. HMI recommends that a further monitoring visit takes place alongside school leaders to review the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

The local authority provides appropriate levels of support and guidance to staff and governors including specific training for teachers and governors through a clear statement of action. Local authority improvement officers and a commissioned school improvement professional maintain a close overview of the school to ensure that it quickly tackles the key issues from the inspection to secure the necessary improvements in pupils' outcomes.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann
Her Majesty's Inspector