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Ms Andrea Fricker
Headteacher
Hermitage Primary School
Belmont Road
Uxbridge
UB8 1RB

Dear Ms Fricker

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

Following my visit to your school on 24 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, deputy headteacher and three middle leaders, four members of the Governing Body and a group of pupils. A telephone conversation took place with a representative of the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated. The lead inspector carried out brief visits to a number of classes accompanied by the headteacher.

Context

Since the previous inspection, a Foundation Stage leader has been appointed. The work on the outside area for children in Reception class has been completed.

Main findings

The school's action plan addresses all of the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. It is clear what actions are to be taken, who will monitor

progress against the plan and how progress will be measured. The timescale leaders have set themselves for becoming a good school is challenging. The school's middle leaders are all fairly new to post, however, they have a clear understanding of what has to be done through their individual roles in order to support the school's senior leaders. Middle leaders are able to report on actions they have taken to help raise standards, however, they would benefit from recording the impact of their actions on a regular basis. Because leadership is now more stable, this is allowing the headteacher to be more strategic in her approach to school improvement. Key to helping the school move forward are the links it has formed with two outstanding primary schools, one in the same local authority and another in Tower Hamlets.

Members of the governing body are keen to become more effective, particularly in regard to monitoring the quality of teaching. They are about to pilot a new initiative of more focused visits to observe teaching, accompanied by a member of the senior leadership team, which will result in a written report and will form the basis of discussions at committee meetings. They have also requested that an external review of governance take place to identify existing strengths and areas for development. An increased understanding by governors of pupil performance data is important, so that they can link this to the quality of teaching pupils experience on a day-to-day basis. It is equally important that members of the governing body become rigorous in how they monitor teachers' progression up the pay spine in relation to their performance in the classroom.

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 leaders and managers record the impact of their actions in order to demonstrate progress made in the areas for which they are being held to account
- make all members of the governing body aware of the key features of pupil performance data, particularly in relation to groups of pupils, and support them to identify what good progress looks like in lessons and pupils' books.
- Establish a rigorous system through which governors can track teachers' progression up the pay spine against their performance in the classroom.

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

External support

The local authority has provided effective support to the school through its Senior Manager for Educational Strategy and Quality Assurance, as well as through additional consultants. The local authority has helped fine-tune the school action plan, and has worked well with the leader of mathematics on devising strategies which challenge more-able pupils. Plans are also in place to work with the governing

body to helping them to ask more challenging questions. Links with other schools have already been established, and mutual visits are scheduled to take place, so that good practice can be shared.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for the London Borough of Hillingdon.
Yours sincerely

John Daniell
Her Majesty's Inspector