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Stephen Hoult-Allen
Headteacher
The Collett School
Lockers Park Lane
Hemel Hempstead
HP1 1TQ

Dear Mr Hoult-Allen

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to The Collett School

Following my visit to your school on 28 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 September 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, four governors and a telephone interview was held with a representative from the local authority. The inspector met informally with pupils during lunch time. The inspector also observed for a short time in a range of lessons across the school. The school improvement plan was evaluated and a range of documentation was reviewed including some pupils' work, moderation of assessment, samples of lesson observation feedback, and school improvement planning.

Context

Since the last inspection two teachers have left and one new teacher has been appointed on a temporary contract.

Main findings

The senior leadership team and the Governing Body understand the improvements required. There is a strong commitment to monitoring and evaluation with a suitable plan in place which is focussed on the necessary priorities. The plan illustrates high expectations for improvement over the next 18 months but is not detailed enough to provide interim milestones to help ensure robust challenge during the year. Positive actions have been taken and the quality of teaching has begun to improve. Morale at the school is good and feedback to teachers has made the increased expectations clear. Effective work on making sure teachers share the same expectations about the levels of pupils' work has helped senior leaders have a better picture of the quality of learning in English.

Senior leaders have responded quickly and have taken action to:

- strengthen the quality of teaching including the use of peer observation
- observe lessons more frequently and provide teachers with feedback which makes explicit the higher expectations of learning
- train staff so that there is a more consistent approach to the teaching of reading throughout the school
- establish rigorous moderation of English work.

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:

- develop shorter term milestones within the school improvement plan to assist robust evaluation during the next 18 months
- monitor how teachers match work to the different levels at which pupils are working
- arrange HMI to provide specialist training for the Governing Body about expectations of pupils' progress for those pupils operating below the level of national tests and GCSEs.

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

External support

The local authority has provided support for the new senior leadership team which has helped to clarify the expectations of teaching and learning. They are also monitoring the progress the school makes against the priorities identified at the last inspection. The school has purchased support from the local authority services for the teaching of reading and specifically phonics, this is beginning to have an impact on the consistency with which reading is taught in the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Janet Thompson
Her Majesty's Inspector