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4 February 2013

Mr Kevin Prunty
Executive Headteacher
Berkeley Primary School
Cranford Lane
Heston
Hounslow
TW5 9HQ

Dear Mr Prunty

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Berkeley Primary School

Following my visit to your school on Monday 4 February 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 executive headteacher and head of school, two representatives from the local authority, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and five other governors, and with a group of staff. The school improvement plan and impact assessment document were scrutinised. Other documents were evaluated including the review by the local authority; lesson observations forms and minutes of governing body meeting were reviewed. The HMI also carried out a tour of the school with the executive headteacher and head of school.

Context

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

Main findings

The executive headteacher and head of school have set a demanding vision to secure rapid improvement at the school. They communicate the urgency for improvement with a determined and supportive leadership style. There is a good balance of setting higher expectations for teachers' performance with intensive training to develop their practice. Staff feel valued and show great commitment to supporting the vision. They have been energised through new training opportunities. Middle leaders have increasing ownership of driving changes in each key stage team and through whole school initiatives for developing literacy and numeracy. There is good collegiality and a refreshing team spirit for the demanding journey the school has to take. Senior leaders are reviewing the performance management of all staff and are refining how targets are set for teachers to make them more accountable for pupils' progress.

The school improvement plan is detailed and includes precise priorities for improvement clearly linked to the previous inspection report. Success criteria are quantifiable achievement data and regular milestones for checking improvements are embedded in the plan. There is clear indication of who is accountable for evaluating the progress of each priority. The plan is used as an iterative document, regularly updated and colour coded for quick and easy tracking by leaders and governors.

The governing body is increasingly effective in holding senior leaders to account for school improvement and is passionately committed to working with senior leaders to make rapid improvements. Governors are becoming more aware of how to use assessment data about pupils' progress to check how well the pupils at Berkeley are doing compared to national expectations. The restructuring of the governing body has given greater shared responsibility for monitoring improvement. Governors recognise that by undertaking a review of their skills and knowledge they can decide how further training can help them to challenge teacher performance and appraisal, and judge the impact of pupil premium funding.

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:

- audit the skills and knowledge of all governors and assess their training needs
- devise an action plan for developing governance which enables the governing body to hold themselves to account for their impact in monitoring the school improvement plan.

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

External support

The senior adviser from the local authority and her team of specialist advisers are working effectively with the headteacher, making sure that action planning and regular review meetings sustain the positive improvements since the last inspection. The executive headteacher is using experienced colleagues from Cranford Community College to develop the quality of teaching and leadership skills. In addition the brokering of visits to outstanding primary schools and work with the local authority to develop better teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make), is already showing positive impact. The local authority is planning to provide further support to strengthen governance of the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Joanna Beckford-Hall
Her Majesty's Inspector