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11 February 2013

Jonathan Gallimore
Hardwick Primary School
Dover Street
Derby
DE23 6QP

Dear Mr Gallimore

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

Following my visit to your school on 11 February 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report my findings. 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 December 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair and a co-opted member of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and a representative of the local authority. The inspector analysed a range of management documents, including those relating to school self-evaluation and development planning. Brief visits were made to each class.

Context

The school's context has not changed since the inspection.

Main findings

The school is maintaining the rapid pace of improvement reported in the section 5 inspection. Due to the effective management of teachers' performance, weak teaching is now rare and there is much more good or outstanding teaching. An effective programme of training has helped teachers to plan learning activities at the correct level of challenge for all groups and to check continuously in lessons that the

challenge is maintained, especially for the more able. More teachers are confidently using the school's new approach to marking which extends pupils' understanding by setting additional challenges. Before the inspection, the school introduced new methods of using information about pupils' progress to plan support precisely matched to the needs of underachieving groups. As these support programmes have been further refined, the groups receiving them have improved their progress, particularly the Gypsy Roma pupils.

In leading improvements to teaching, the new headteacher is well supported by a team of senior leaders. They have strong support from the rest of the staff in their goal of quickly moving the school to 'good'. The senior leadership team has an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses from their systematic approach to monitoring lessons and their very informative pupil progress data. The school development plan provides effective strategies for tackling the weaknesses, the impact of which can be seen in significant improvements to attendance and progress.

Since the inspection, the IEB has continued to provide strong challenge and guidance, which school leaders value in helping to keep the school moving forward. School leaders support the process by providing the IEB with clear information about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Appropriate plans are in place to establish a Governing Body with the skills to continue the work started by the IEB. The transfer of governance is expected to take place early in the summer term.

Senior leaders and the IEB are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

Since the inspection, the local authority continues to monitor the school's improvement and provide appropriate support. The level of support has rightly been reduced in line with the school's rapidly increasing capacity to improve pupils' achievement independently. The support that the local authority has brokered from other schools has been particularly useful in improving the quality of teaching.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the IEB and the Director of Children's Services for Derby City.

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford
Her Majesty's Inspector