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11 February 2013

Mrs Linda Perrier
Headteacher
Harlesden Primary School
Acton Lane
London
NW10 8UT

Dear Mrs Perrier

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

Following my visit to your school on Monday 11 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 headteacher and other senior leaders, representatives from the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Many staff attended a meeting at the end of the day. The school improvement plan was evaluated. The headteacher and HMI walked around the school together to look briefly at the learning environment in each class and shared the findings from the senior leaders' most recent observations of the quality of teaching.

Context

Two teachers left at the end of the autumn term. In all, four teachers on the staff are not permanent; three are on short-term supply and one has a one-year contract.

Main findings

Although the school's action plan contains appropriate actions to tackle all the areas for improvement identified by the inspection, it does not have quantifiable targets

linked to pupils' attainment and progress. It lacks clear timelines to help leaders plot the journey the school needs to take to become good. Other monitoring and planning documents could be usefully pulled together to help leaders, including governors, to judge the progress the school is making. In practice, leaders regularly evaluate what is working well and what needs to be improved.

The headteacher and the deputy headteacher carry out more rigorous observations of the quality of teaching than in the past. They give staff clear guidance on what to improve and follow this up with further observations. Training for staff is varied and well-targeted to their individual needs as well as to whole-school initiatives. Subject leaders have a greater role in supporting staff and checking what is working in their subjects. All staff use information about pupils' levels of work to identify gaps in their knowledge so that additional help and support can be provided to some groups of pupils.

Governors have a range of experience and expertise that enables them to ask searching questions about pupils' learning and progress. They have a good knowledge of what is happening in school based on well-established links with subject leaders and through regular visits. Governors are concerned about the turnover of staff having a negative impact on the consistent quality of teaching and learning. Securing full-time permanent staff is a priority.

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:

- improve the action plan so that it includes clear timelines and quantitative targets and pull together the range of information the school has to help leaders and governors measure the school's progress towards becoming good
- actively recruit experienced permanent teachers to strengthen the school's capacity to improve the quality of teaching.

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

External support

The school draws well on a range of support that is either provided directly by local authority consultants or arranged through the school's link adviser. The school is part of a network with other schools and is working closely with one nearby school to share good practice in monitoring and observing the quality of teaching. Many teachers have been to other schools to observe good practice. External consultants have provided training, such as that for supporting pupils with special educational needs and to improve the quality of pupils' writing, which has been well received and much appreciated by staff.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Wotherspoon
Her Majesty's Inspector