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12 February 2013

Mark Wadhams
Headteacher
Aqueduct Primary School
Castlefields Way
Aqueduct
Telford
TF4 3RP

Dear Mr Wadhams

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

Following my visit to your school on 12 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 four members of the senior leadership team. Meetings were also held with three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. A learning walk was completed with the headteacher. The school improvement plan and lesson observation records were also evaluated.

Context

There have been no contextual changes since the school's previous inspection.

Main findings

In a short space of time, some important actions have been taken to ensure that:

- those with extra responsibilities at all levels, including governors, are more involved in checking on the school's work and asking the right questions
- teachers are becoming increasingly clear regarding how pupils' success in lessons will be measured
- teachers have a better understanding of the amount of progress pupils are required to make in a year.

Actions to improve teaching are showing signs of success with improved practice in some classes. However, results from visits to classrooms or checks on pupils' workbooks do not always contain precise detail on learning, progress and standards. A special committee of governors has been set up to review the impact of actions take to raise pupils' achievement. The headteacher recognises that:

- leaders do not compare the information gathered on pupils' attainment and progress with how well pupils are doing in other schools nationally, particularly, for those whom the school receives additional funding
- improvement plans need to show how and when the governors will gather first-hand evidence
- the daily letters and sounds activities for younger pupils are not organised well enough to ensure that pupils quickly gain the skills in reading to support learning in all subjects
- a small number of classrooms are cluttered or untidy and the activities provided lack interest or challenge, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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:

- make sure that improvement plans clearly specify how and when governors will check on the effectiveness of the school's actions
- ensure that the governing body is able to measure how well the additional money it receives for those pupils attracting pupil premium funding is helping to close the gap in pupils' achievement
- make sure that classrooms provide the best learning opportunities to all pupils
- enable staff to intervene effectively when pupils' progress in reading, has stalled.

HMI will

- make available latest reports to the school
- advise on comparing school data to national data
- provide details of outstanding Early Years Foundation Stage practice and give examples of where early reading is taught effectively.

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

External support

The headteacher and members of the governing body value the support and challenge provided by the officers of the local authority. Support to enable the governors to fulfil their strategic management role has been particularly effective.

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

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Wordsworth
Her Majesty's Inspector