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6 February 2013

Mr Michael Lovett
Principal
Harris Primary Academy Chafford Hundred
Mayflower Road
Chafford Hundred
Grays
RM16 6SA

Dear Mr Lovett

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Harris Primary Academy, Chafford Hundred.

Following my visit to your school on 6 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 staff and with the Director of Primary Education for the Harris Academy Federation, who is also a governor of the school. The school action plan was evaluated. The inspector carried out brief visits to lessons, accompanied by senior staff, where she spoke to teachers and pupils, looked at the displays in the corridors and classrooms and at the work in pupils' exercise books.

Context

There have been no staff changes since the previous inspection.

Main findings

The school is making reasonable progress towards becoming a good school. It has a clear action plan to tackle the main weaknesses identified at the last inspection in

November 2012. The Director of Primary Education for Harris is challenging the school well to ensure the plan covers the main issues that the school needs to improve quickly. Reasonable timescales are set for improvement and there is a strong focus on evaluating the progress made towards improving the quality of teaching rapidly.

Senior staff are willing to drive improvements in teaching. However, they do not set their sights high enough and remain too accepting of weak teaching. They do not routinely check that staff implement the new policies agreed to improve the quality of teaching. For example, in some classrooms the teachers' spelling and handwriting are incorrect in pupils' exercise books and on the white board. Not all the phase leaders are building on the support from Harris advisers well enough to improve teaching in their phase of the academy.

The leadership of the school recognises the urgent need for improvement and is keen to raise standards in the quality of teaching. It is supportive of staff. It has started to act on the areas of improvement identified at the last inspection. However, leadership is not yet dynamic or proactive enough in ensuring that all staff make the required changes to improve the quality of teaching. This means that pupils are not yet on track to reach the highest standards or to make the progress of which they are capable.

The sponsor has 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:

- Ensure the senior team observe outstanding teaching and learning in other schools, so that they raise their expectations of what it is possible to achieve.

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

External support

The school is receiving high quality support from advisers within the Harris Federation to tackle the areas for improvement.

Yours sincerely

Gill Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector