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12 February 2013

Mrs A MacGregor
Headteacher
Cophorne CofE Junior School
Church Road
Cophorne
West Sussex
RH10 3RD

Dear Mrs MacGregor

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Cophorne CofE Junior School

Following my visit to your school on Tuesday 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, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated along with other documents relating to lesson observations and performance management. The inspector was taken on a tour of the school by Year 6 pupils to see the work of the school.

Context

There has been no change in the school's status or changes in key personnel since the section 5 inspection.

Main findings

The headteacher and her strong senior leadership team have made a good start in tackling the areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection. They have prepared an action plan that deals with these areas and places a high priority on improving teaching as the key to raising achievement. The goals for success in the plan are appropriately cross referenced to the inspection issues, but the steps along the way to achieving these goals are not always clearly stated.

Strategies for the monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice and pupils' progress are now much more effective. As a result teachers are more aware of their responsibilities for the quality of learning in their lessons, but there is still work to be done in securing consistently good teaching in all classes. Pupils' progress is assessed more rigorously, although these assessments do not take place often enough to encourage rapid improvement. The accuracy of initial assessments of attainment carried out when pupils join the school has improved significantly. This now gives a clear baseline for measuring progress through to Year 6.

The governing body has reviewed their own skills and responsibilities and have benefitted from extra training in the interpretation of performance data. Information on pupils' performance is not always presented to the governors in a consistent form which sometimes makes this interpretation difficult. The improvement in their skills is helping them challenge and support the school through a clearer understanding of the school's overall strengths and areas for improvement. Governors are now well informed about the progress the school is making in dealing with the areas for improvement. Good relationships between school leaders and the governors support a positive approach to improving the school.

Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- Help the governing body to maintain an overview of progress by making sure school data is presented to them in a consistent form every time, and that the school action plan for improvement clearly indicates the timescale over which improvements are expected.
- Improve monitoring of pupils' standards and progress by increasing the frequency with which their work is assessed.

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

External support

The headteacher is keen to make good use of the support available from the local authority as well as from local schools, including an outstanding school. Teachers have visited other schools to see different ways of working and observe outstanding practice. This support has been effective in allowing teachers to gain a wider perspective on teaching and so improve the quality of their own work

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

Yours sincerely

Christine Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector