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27 February 2013

Mrs R Clark
Headteacher
Cippenham Nursery School
St Andrew's Way
Slough
SL1 5NL

Dear Mrs Clark

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 the Cippenham Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 26 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 this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and staff with specific responsibilities, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority. The post inspection action plan was evaluated alongside other documentation related to school improvement and self-evaluation. A range of documentation related to planning and the assessment of children's learning was also reviewed.

Context

One member of staff has returned from maternity leave on a part-time basis. There have been no further changes to staffing since the section 5 inspection, which judged the school to require improvement.

Main findings

Discussions with school leaders and those members of staff with specific responsibility confirm that planning is now comprehensively linked to all areas of learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All staff participate weekly in the construction of this planning. This is leading to greater levels of consistency in teaching and learning for all children across the three classes. Teamwork amongst the staff is a growing strength and this is reflected in all Early Years practitioners contributing to the regular and comprehensive assessment of children's progress. As a consequence, all learning activities are now more closely linked to the individual needs of each child.

Teaching and learning are regularly monitored and findings from this are used appropriately to support school self-evaluation and the identification of further training and support. The attendance of children for the afternoon session has improved due to regular monitoring by the family support worker. A detailed action plan covers all the key issues raised at the last inspection. This is regularly reviewed by senior staff and governors. Responsibilities are clearly identified, including those for monitoring and evaluation. However, the absence of specific targets linked to children's progress and achievement limits the effectiveness of this plan in measuring the school's success and the strengthening of performance management.

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 recommends that further action is taken to:

- Provide specific targets linked to the achievements of children within the action plan to measure success and facilitate robust performance management.

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

External support

The local authority provides appropriate levels of support and guidance to staff and governors within a climate of diminishing resources. The school makes good use of its links with other local nursery schools to share best practice and for training staff.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann

Her Majesty's Inspector