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Mick Russell
Wyre Forest School
Comberton Road
Kidderminster
DY10 3DX

Dear Mr Russell

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Wyre Forest School

Following my visit to your school on 1 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 24 October 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, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor and a representative of the local authority. The school development plan was evaluated. The inspector also scrutinised other documents around the monitoring of teaching and the data related to the progress which pupils are making. A tour of one of the school's sites was also undertaken and several lessons were visited during this tour.

Context

Since the previous inspection, several teachers have either been transferred to different roles within the school or have resigned. The school had been scheduled to relocate to a new building in September 2013. However the timing of this move is now uncertain and is likely to be postponed until 2014.

Main findings

Since the inspection, the school improvement plan has been revised and amended to take in to account the recommendations from the report. It is a clear, concise and well-focused document, which clearly links to a 5 year plan. It outlines who is responsible for implementing and evaluating the different areas against clear timescales. It is regularly reviewed for progress, which also makes it an effective document to plot improvements made.

Effective procedures which had been implemented prior to the previous inspection, have allowed leaders to continue to monitor and improve the quality of teaching effectively. The school provides proportionate support for staff based on a five stage approach according to the impact teachers have on helping pupils to make progress. Although it has been a short time since the inspection, the school is already able to demonstrate improvements in the proportion of teachers who are able to teach well. The support provided ranges from advice provided by local authority's teaching and learning advisers to partnering with outstanding teachers in the school as well as linking with other schools in the local authority, where there is outstanding teaching. Evidence is already available to show that some areas identified in the inspection, such as times when teachers talk too much, are being tackled, so that lessons become more interesting for pupils.

Leaders are actively and creatively seeking solutions to any obstacles which arise. There are several challenges identified by leaders with regard to the school's relocation. Other challenges identified, include how to work effectively with the partner school and how to integrate pupils with the wide range of needs that there are in Wyre Forest. Another significant challenge is finding a teacher of mathematics following the recent departure of the leader of this subject. Where improvements are yet to be seen, plans are in place for imminent implementation of new ways of working. An example of this is the phonics (using the sounds of letters to support the development of literacy) programme which is due to be introduced across the school after February half term. The governing body has a clear awareness of its strengths and where it has needed to improve. A strong system of committees supports the different objectives in the school improvement plan and effectively holds the responsible staff to account. Following training provided by the local authority, they are more able to ask the right questions to enable them to hold the school's leaders to account and to closely monitor the improvements being made.

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:

- HMI will use contacts within Ofsted to find examples of where there is outstanding practice in:

- Co-locating a special school to a new site with a mainstream school
 - The management of pupils with challenging behaviour who are educated alongside those who have more complex needs
 - Managing a school with a wide range of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs
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- HMI to visit the school for half a day to undertake joint lesson observations, particularly focussing on supporting feedback to teachers on where improvements can be made.
 - HMI to contact the mathematics subject team in Ofsted with regard to discussing strategies for covering a potential long-term mathematics vacancy, by using internal resources.

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

External support

The local authority has provided effective support through its teaching and learning advisers. This has helped the school to develop the quality of teaching across the school. The Project Board, made up of school and local authority representatives meets on a regular basis to discuss ways to move the school forward. An example of this is the impact of training on the effectiveness of the governing body in enabling them to monitor the school's work more effectively.

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

Yours sincerely

David Muir

Her Majesty's Inspector

cc. Chair of the Governing body, Wyre Forest School
John Edwards, Head of Learning and Achievement; Gail Quinton, Director of Children's Services, Worcestershire Local Authority