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13 March 2013

Mrs R Flanders
Headteacher
Parklands Community Primary School
Parklands Road
Little Sutton
Ellesmere Port
Cheshire
CH66 3RL

Dear Mrs Flanders

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Parklands Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12 March, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in December 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, a Local Leader in Education (LLE) who is headteacher of a school in the same Educational Improvement Partnership, the Chair of the Governing Body, a parent governor who works in the school and a representative of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

There have been no changes in staffing since the inspection in December.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Governors and senior staff are working together to bring about rapid improvement. There is a shared drive to be better and enthusiasm for the headteacher's clear vision. The headteacher has built on the work started in the autumn term to ensure the school has consistent and well-embedded structures and procedures. Staff with specific responsibilities have risen to the challenge of reviewing policies and practice to outline the basis for action. The headteacher has consulted governors, staff, pupils, parents and other schools before taking key decisions. As a result, there is an understanding of the reasons behind, as well as strong support for, new ways of working. A good example is the emphasis on ensuring that pupils take responsibility for their learning and for their actions: observation and anecdotal evidence point to markedly stronger learning attitudes and improved behaviour. Work in pupils' books is neatly presented and pupils are following up activities at home.

The school's improvement plan covers all aspects identified for further improvement in the December inspection with the addition of mathematics, identified through the local authority's scrutiny of pupils' work. Although actions are linked to success criteria, some criteria are too general to allow critical evaluation of the impact of the action taken and not all are linked to the expected outcomes for pupils.

The governing body is supportive; some governors have increased their involvement in school life and taken on roles linked to the school's priorities. With impending changes in the governing body, it is an appropriate time for the school to commission an external review of governance. This should pinpoint where tailored training and support can enhance its effectiveness. The Chair of the Governing Body was right to query the apparent delay in organising aspects of the considerable programme of support from the local authority. Contacts have now been agreed.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Strategic Director of Children's Services for Cheshire West and Chester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sonja Øyen
Her Majesty's Inspector