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15 March 2013

Miss Joanne Smithson
Headteacher
Oulton Primary School
Green Lea
Oulton
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS26 8NT

Dear Miss Smithson

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Oulton Primary School on 15 March 2013

Following my visit to your school on 15 March 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 December 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, other leaders, members of the governing body, a local leader of education and two representatives from the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated, and a range of documentation was reviewed, including documentation about teachers' performance management. The headteacher took the HMI on a tour of the school.

Context

Since the inspection two permanent members of teaching staff have been appointed to replace two teachers who were covering classes on a temporary basis.

Main findings

Leaders and governors were pleased with the outcomes from the recent inspection and feel the school is continuing on its path of improvement. They accept that the focus of their evaluations now needs to be based on a clear view of the journey to get to 'good' rather than comparing the school with its past performance. The school has amended its action plans and has drafted an additional post Ofsted action plan. However, the plans' current

effectiveness is limited. This is because some of the actions detailed are not clear enough to bring about the pace of improvement leaders aspire to and are not linked to precise criteria or milestones against which leaders and governors can measure success. Nonetheless, leaders articulate a strong ambition to bring about further improvement.

As part of their performance management all teachers share the same whole school targets that relate to levels of pupils' progress and improving the quality of teaching. The headteacher has a clear view of what needs to be improved. She has plans to tailor these targets to individual teachers, to reflect the progress made in individual classes, and the specific improvements needed to improve teaching as integral to each teachers' performance management.

Partnerships with a link school and a local leader of education together with consultants in assessment and mathematics have already begun work with leaders to address aspects for improvement identified by the inspection. Activities are already underway to check teachers' planning and pupils' work and leaders are following up the issues identified. However, leaders and governors agree that there needs to be a greater focus on the impact actions are having on the quality of pupils' learning.

Senior leaders and governors 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:

- review the school's improvement plan, and subject leaders' action plans, to ensure they contain carefully considered actions which will address the school's weaknesses, and include explicit milestones and measurable criteria so that progress can be checked
- ensure the governing body use these plans to measure progress and evaluate the impact of actions to hold senior and middle leaders to account.

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

External support

The local authority and the headteacher have worked in partnership to coordinate a range of useful support for staff including links with a partner school and a local leader of education. These have already led to a stronger understanding of the use of assessment data to drive improvement and monitor the impact of actions being taken.

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

Yours sincerely

Adrian Guy

Her Majesty's Inspector