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Miss L Sujeewon
Headteacher
New Town Primary School
School Terrace
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 3LS

Dear Miss Sujeewon

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to New Town Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12th 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 January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the Chair of Governors and a representative of the local authority. The school's action plans and school improvement plan was evaluated. The inspector also looked at the school self-evaluation document, information on the attainment and progress of pupils, external reports and the school logs in relation to the monitoring of behaviour. In addition, the headteacher took the HMI on a tour of the school to look briefly at teaching and learning.

Context

Since the school was inspected, the nursery teacher and two teaching assistants have resigned. They will be leaving at the end of the spring term.

Main findings

Since the inspection, the headteacher has refocused the school to drive improvement and improve the quality of teaching. Senior leaders and governors have accepted that the priorities identified were the most important ones for the school. There is a renewed impetus to quickly focus on improving pupils' progress. Senior leaders have set clear expectations in relation to pupils' expected progress in each year group. The information on the progress of different groups of pupils is beginning to be monitored more carefully and meetings with class teachers to discuss pupils' progress take place regularly.

A timetable for school improvement has been developed which set out a training and development programme for teachers and teaching assistant for the spring term. Plans for further training for the summer term are yet to be finalised.

Although the school improvement plan has been revised, at present it does not provide sharp enough, precisely timed actions to drive improvement because although activities are planned, they are not specifically linked to what difference they are expected to make to pupils' learning. The plan sets out milestones linked to each area for improvement, but the milestones are not time related and therefore limit the opportunity for senior leaders and governors to measure the impact of actions when they are completed. The governing body understands its responsibility to check on the progress towards achieving the planned actions and to hold leaders and staff to account for their performance. However, so far, the action plan does not set out clearly how governors will check on the schools' progress.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take 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:

- increase the rigour of monitoring systems to check on the quality of teaching which includes checking on teachers' planning linked to pupils' learning in lessons, pupils' progress over time and pupils understanding of their own learning to further improve the pace of learning and check activities appropriately challenge all groups of pupils
- link the planned actions in the school development plan more closely to the impact they are expected to make to pupils' learning
- ensure monitoring and evaluation activities are clearly identified in the action plan to set out how and when senior leaders and governors will check on the schools' progress towards the planned improvements
- evaluate the progress of groups of pupils more closely and plan intervention and support to accelerate the progress of underachieving pupils.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection. Please send me a copy of the updated action plan and the information on pupil' progress following the next round of assessments. I will visit the school in the summer term

to work alongside senior leaders to evaluate the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress and meet with governors.

External support

The school partnership advisor has supported the school in redrafting the school improvement plan. Training from the English and mathematics advisors is beginning to help teachers to improve their teaching and more training is planned this term. The local authority has also provided support to the school in setting up the revised tracking system to check on pupils' attainment and progress. The initial problems with the new system have now been resolved. The special educational needs advisor has carried out a comprehensive review of provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs which is a useful document to support the school to improve this provision. The local authority continues to support the school on a regular basis. A behaviour review is due to take place by the local authority in the summer term. Some support has also been provided through the cluster of good and outstanding schools in the local area.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector