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Mr Charles Chambers
Ley Hill Junior and Infant (NC) School
Rhayader Road
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Dear Mr Chambers

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Ley Hill Junior and Infant (NC) School

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 8 November 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, two members of the governing body, a national leader of education and a representative of the local authority. A range of documentation was reviewed including records linked to performance of teachers. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection the school has successfully applied to convert to an academy. The new school will open on 1 July 2013.

Main findings

School leaders and staff have acted promptly to address the areas for improvement identified in the recent inspection report. The revised improvement plan identifies clearly the school's ambitions to raise achievement, improve the quality teaching,

improve the behaviour of the pupils and increase the effectiveness of the governing body. The improvement plan has ambitious targets for improving teaching and behaviour, and milestones against which progress can be measured. However, its targets linked to improving the speaking skills of the youngest children are less precise. This will make it difficult for the school to be clear about the impact of actions taken to improve these children's language development. The detail included about the role of the governing body in monitoring the implementation of the improvement plan is quite limited.

The school has strong links with an outstanding local school and four staff have attended training to help them become 'good' teachers. Teachers welcome this support and monitoring of planning, lessons and pupils' work demonstrate that the training and coaching are having a positive impact. A local leader of education is working with nursery staff to secure securing better provision and ensure that the children have plenty of opportunities to develop their language skills.

Systems are now in place which will help ensure that the governing body receives plenty of information about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. However, governors acknowledge that there is a need for them to develop further the skills which will enable them to check more independently on the quality of education and the impact the school is having on pupils' learning.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to:

- ensure the school improvement plan identifies clearly the targets for improved speaking skills in the in the nursery class and the precise role governors will play in monitoring and evaluating the improvement plan
- secure an external review of governance to identify clearly areas where governors require training to enable them to hold school leaders to account.

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

External support

The school is receiving effective support from a national leader of education to tackle the areas for improvement linked with the quality of teaching and pupils' behaviour. A local leader of education is helping the school improve provision in the nursery. The local authority commissioned this support. A local authority officer attends monthly meetings where progress on each improvement point is reviewed. To support leadership and governance of the school has engaged an external consultant. The consultant has helped ensure that the action plan is sharp and, in most areas, identifies precisely what the school is aiming to achieve. He has led

governor training. This has been helpful. It has identified the need for additional support for governors.

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

Yours sincerely

Anthony O'Malley
Her Majesty's Inspector