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Mrs D Loveless
Headteacher
Kingswood Infant School
Clay Hill Road
Basildon
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Dear Mrs Loveless

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Kingswood Infant School

Following my visit to your school on 25 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, deputy headteacher and other staff with leadership responsibility, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement and action plan were evaluated alongside a range of other monitoring, performance management and self-evaluation documents.

Context

There have been no changes to the staffing since the previous inspection. There is currently one vacancy on the governing body.

Main findings

The action plan provides an appropriate structure for tackling the issues identified at the last inspection. Responsibilities are clearly identified within specific timescales to support school improvement. However, the absence of targets linked to pupil achievement means that it is difficult to measure the impact of these actions on the progress of all pupils.

All staff with a leadership responsibility undertake observations of lessons with a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching in all classes. Combined with some effective sharing of best practice amongst staff this has led to a greater understanding of what represents good or outstanding teaching. Pupil progress and teacher performance are monitored more rigorously through half-termly progress meetings. Teachers' performance targets are linked more closely to pupil outcomes and, in turn, are leading to a greater sense of accountability amongst the teachers. A review of the procedures and support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has been undertaken with evidence of improvement in provision. However, teachers do not yet take full responsibility for the progress these pupils make in their class to ensure that gaps in achievement are reduced.

The local authority has provided extra training for governors in the use of data and monitoring the work of the school. As a result, governors demonstrate a growing level of understanding about the school's strengths and weaknesses and are better prepared to ask challenging questions of senior leaders about school performance. However, a full external review of governance is yet to be undertaken.

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:

- identify specific pupil progress targets within the action plan to measure success and facilitate robust performance management
- ensure that an external review of governance is undertaken.

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

External support

The local authority provides some good support and guidance to school leaders and governors. Local authority improvement officers maintain a close overview of the school to ensure that it quickly tackles the key issues from the inspection and secures the necessary improvements in pupils' outcomes.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann
Her Majesty's Inspector