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Carolyn Baxter
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Baxter

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Kinsale Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 17 April 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, the acting chair of governors, and a representative from the local authority. Samples of pupils' work were examined, with particular attention given to Year 6. The majority of classes were visited in order to observe learning. HMI scrutinised school improvement documents and those concerned with the monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress.

Context

There have been no contextual changes since the last inspection.

Main findings

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have moved quickly to address issues identified at the last inspection. Many of these had already been identified with appropriate remedial actions underway. As a consequence the changes are beginning to have an impact on the progress of pupils.

The school has well-developed and accurate assessment systems in place. Pupils' progress is already monitored systematically by all teachers. Consequently the school has an accurate view of how well groups and individuals are doing. This, together with early assessment on entry, enables the school to target support where it is needed quickly. This support is effective. The school can demonstrate accelerating progress, currently above national average for reading, writing and mathematics by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6. Girls attain higher levels than boys, but boys' progress accelerates markedly in Year 6 because the school provides effective support.

In class, pupils demonstrate good skills of learning. They work capably and remain focussed on the work in hand. However, this ability is not harnessed by teachers well enough. Typically, the work or topic being taught is appropriate for their age but at too low a level for their ability. Consequently not all are stretched to attain the higher levels that they are capable of. The school recognises this and has begun to make changes to address it. The lesson observation system now pays appropriate attention to the learning taking place in class. Together with accurate assessment, this is enabling teachers to build a higher level of challenge into their classes although this is not yet consistent across the whole school.

Much professional development has been undertaken. Priority has, rightly, been given to teaching and learning. Extensive visits to other schools and peer observations of teaching have taken place. The identification and sharing of best practice is now systematic.

Governors have had training on the analysis of school performance data. They now ask challenging questions of school leaders and are increasingly holding them to account for the school's performance. Required actions are designated to individuals however the setting of overall performance targets, particularly in relation to pupils' attainment, is not precise enough. Consequently governors cannot easily monitor the progress that the school is making.

Senior leaders 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:

- ensure that the level of the work that pupils undertake in class challenges them to learn at the highest level at which they are capable

- ensure that governors set challenging whole-school targets for the proportion of pupils attaining higher-than-average levels
- monitor progress towards these targets closely.

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

External support

The school has received support from the local authority on lesson observations, assessing accurately, and training in data analysis both for leaders and governors.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Seath
Her Majesty's Inspector