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26 April 2013

Mr Phil Sharrock
Headteacher
Kate's Hill Community Primary School
Peel Street
Dudley
DY2 7HP

Dear Mr Sharrock

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Kate's Hill Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 26 April 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plan were evaluated. Short visits were made to all classrooms. The single central record was checked.

Context

Since the school was inspected, the interim headteacher has been appointed as the substantive headteacher and four teachers have left the school. Teaching vacancies have been filled with temporary posts until permanent appointments can be made. In addition, two new teaching assistants have been appointed and have taken up

their posts. Appropriate checks have been carried out to ensure that the temporary teachers and the teaching assistants are suitable and qualified to work in the school.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The senior leadership team are enthusiastic and committed to bringing about rapid improvements to the outcomes for pupils. They have identified clear and appropriate actions to improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good and have put in place procedures for monitoring the progress of pupils. As a result, there have been significant inroads in wiping out inadequate teaching and in accelerating pupil progress.

Members of the governing body have improved the way they gather information about the quality of the school's work. They have received additional training to ensure that they understand their responsibilities and all are now much clearer about the expectations of governors. Their meetings focus on pupil progress and school improvement issues, and they receive the information they need to provide the appropriate level of challenge and support.

The school action plan is detailed and provides a suitable vehicle for school improvement. Nevertheless, it could be better. While some actions are linked to measurable targets, others are neither sufficiently sharp nor easily measured. In addition, milestones with associated success criteria for evaluating progress are not always clearly identified. This makes it more difficult for the school to recognise and intervene at an early stage when they are in danger of not meeting longer-term targets.

The local authority is providing good support to the school. For example, numeracy and early years consultants are working regularly in the school supporting team leaders and helping to improve the quality of teaching. Development reviews and regular meetings between the headteacher and school improvement partner identify the progress made against the action plan and provide opportunities to consider the next steps. However, while the local authority's statement of action states clearly the actions proposed in the light of the inspection report that resulted in serious weaknesses, it does not include the arrangements for informing registered parents or carers of the proposed action or of how their views will be ascertained and taken into account. Actions are not spread across the timeframe of the category of concern and the criteria to judge the impact of actions are not always sufficiently precise, for example about the progress expected of particular groups of pupils. These weaknesses mean that the local authority's statement of action requires amendment to ensure that the school receives the support and challenge required to secure rapid and sustained improvement.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The school's action plan is fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is not fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, and the Director of Children's Services for Dudley. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Barkway
Additional Inspector