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29 April 2013

Mrs S Swann
Ludlow Junior School
Clee View
Ludlow
SY8 1HX

Dear Mrs Swann

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

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 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 headteacher, three members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of Year 6 pupils. The school's action plan was evaluated.

Context

There have been no material changes to the school since the inspection in December 2012.

Main findings

Improvement in the way the school runs has already taken place. Data on the progress that pupils make is used regularly to monitor pupils' progress and ensure that pupils are taught at the correct level. Spending on the pupil premium is targeted better, and there is improved accountability for this spending as the progress of the relevant pupils is closely monitored. Senior leaders are taking more responsibility for leading and checking the school's work.

School leaders have written a good action plan which meets all the areas identified as needing improvement. The plan is accompanied by a week-by-week schedule of actions. The plan should mean that the necessary improvement is substantially in place by December 2013. However the plan does not contain enough interim targets, or milestones, or a strategy for evaluating whether these have been achieved. This makes it harder for senior leaders or governors to be sure that the progress of the school is fast enough.

The governing body has responded well to the inspection. It has reorganised its committee structure and has strengthened a key committee which monitors the progress with the action plan, and the progress that pupils make. Members of the governing body have a good grasp of how the school is improving. The governing body management of the pupil premium funding and their supervision of the management of the performance of teachers have both improved now that data is more readily available.

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, I recommend that further action is taken to:

- produce a concise strategy to evaluate the success of the action plan that includes succinct, and where possible measurable, interim targets. I intend to return to the school before the end of the summer term to assist in the evaluation of the progress of the school at that stage.

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

External support

The local authority has provided good support through the link adviser and a mathematics adviser. Further mathematics support is planned. It would be helpful for an external partner to assist in assessing the quality of the school's work towards the end of 2013.

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

Yours sincerely

Robert Barbour
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – (including where a school is an academy)
- the academy chain where relevant
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- The lead inspector