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30 April 2013

Mr Mike Owen
Headteacher
The Grove Primary School
Asfordby Road
Melton Mowbray
LE13 0HN

Dear Mr Owen

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to The Grove Primary School, Leicestershire local authority.

Following my visit to your school on 29 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 November 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated, along with documents recording the outcomes of monitoring activities.

Context

There have been no significant changes to the context of the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

Main findings

School leaders at all levels have acted with urgency in identifying and carrying out appropriate actions to improve teaching, pupils' achievement in mathematics and their behaviour and safety. School action planning makes the responsibilities of all staff and the governing body clear. The systems that school leaders use to check on how well improvement actions are working have been strengthened so that leaders have a more accurate view of the impact of their work.

Members of the governing body are using the training they have received from the local authority to use school data more effectively. They have stepped up their visits to the school to check first hand on its work. The reports presented to the governing body by the headteacher about how well improvement work is going are not precise enough to help its members make checks that improvements are happening as quickly as they should.

Teaching in mathematics is now better as a result of suitable training and support for teachers. Their subject knowledge has improved, work is more often matched to pupils' needs and pupils receive more written and spoken feedback which is helping them improve their mathematical understanding. The headteacher acknowledges that pupils require more opportunities to use their basic mathematical skills creatively in other subjects.

Pupils have been reorganised into ability groups for mathematics lessons. It is too soon to be sure whether this approach has been equally effective for improving the progress of all pupil groups.

Swift action has been taken to raise the expectations of, and to improve, the management of pupils' behaviour. As a result, recorded incidents of unacceptable behaviour have reduced.

School staff and the governing body are focused on what they need to do to make improvements but school action plans, though improved, do not always help to drive improvements as swiftly as they could. They don't always have clear and measurable targets for everyone to aim for. They do not identify points along the way to check that the actions are improving the school to 'good' quickly enough.

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 recommend that further action is taken to:

- identify measurable targets and identify points in time to check on the success of improvement actions
- ensure that information given to the governing body is clear and precise about the impact of improvement actions taken

- check that new arrangements for setting in mathematics are equally effective in ensuring at least good progress for all groups of pupils.

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

External support

The local authority has supported the headteacher in the development of action planning. Plans are in place for this support to continue so that plans can be fully effective in driving improvement as quickly as possible. School leaders have been pro-active in seeking the support of independent consultants and specialists to help them improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics and the teaching of phonics. The impact of this work is currently being monitored by subject leaders.

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

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey
Her Majesty's Inspector