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Janet Newton
Healdswood Infants' and Nursery School
Barker Avenue, Skegby
Sutton-in-Ashfield
NG17 3FQ

Dear Mrs Newton

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Healdswood Infants' and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 15 May 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 on 30 January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, a meeting was held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and five governors, including the Chair and Vice-Chair. I also met the local authority's Education Improvement Adviser and visited classes with the headteacher. The school development plan and governors' action plan were evaluated. Pupils' writing books and records about their progress were checked. A section of the most recent headteacher report to governors on the quality of teaching was scrutinised.

Context

Since the school's inspection in January, three staff have taken family leave and have been replaced by temporary supply staff.

Main findings

The school development plan lacks focus. Actions in the plan do not pinpoint the most urgent priorities to improve the teaching quickly enough. The governing body does not receive sharp enough evaluations of teaching from school leaders. The headteacher and staff are now working with a local leader in education, a headteacher of an outstanding school. Although this partnership helps teachers to see good or outstanding teaching, leaders' own evaluations of teaching are not taking sufficient account of pupils' learning and progress. This is because monitoring is not robust enough to shine a light on the most significant areas of teaching that need improving most. Governors do not receive enough detail about how much progress pupils are expected to make in reading and writing. These shortcomings make it harder for leaders and governors to measure how well achievement is rising or how best to intervene if pupils fall short of their expected attainment targets.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection and plans are not sharply focused on rapidly bringing about improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- step up the frequency of monitoring of teaching and intervene sooner if pupils fall behind in reading and writing
- slim down the number of actions cited in the school development plan so that it is sharper with clear measures of success to help monitor the school's actions
- optimise the links with the local leader in education and other schools to make sure that teachers see the best ways of teaching reading and writing.

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that a second visit takes place in the Autumn term 2013 to check that the teaching is improving and that pupils are making enough progress in reading and writing.

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

External support

Before the school's inspection in January 2013 the local authority identified the school as medium risk and provided light touch support. Given the outcome of that inspection, the school is, rightly, being given higher priority, including a closer scrutiny of the impact that the partnership with the local leader in education is having on improving teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou
Her Majesty's Inspector