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23 May 2013

Mr Spencer Allen
Headteacher
Chiseldon Primary School
Castle View Road
Swindon
SN4 0NS

Dear Mr Allen,

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Chiseldon Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 23 May 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, I met with you and the assistant headteacher, other senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection to improve the school. I scrutinised a range of documents including the school development and examples of English lesson planning.

Context

In April 2013 the school became part of a hard federation with two other schools and a new headteacher appointed to Chiseldon. An executive headteacher leads and a single governing body oversees all schools. The executive headteacher is also a National Leader of Education.

Main Findings

A number of significant steps have been taken to improve the quality of education at the school since it was last inspected. The quality of lesson planning in English and mathematics has improved markedly. There is now better match of activities to meet the academic needs and interests of all pupils. The headteacher has modelled what good teaching is like so all staff know what is expected of them. This, together with training and guidance for teachers have united the staff who are now determined, and know how, to improve. The reading ability of all pupils is now carefully tracked using the new reading assessment system. Links with other schools within the federation are already leading to the consistent application of policies and procedures, for example to improve calculation skills. The quality of the school's action planning to tackle the issues from the last inspection is much sharper. Overall, the new headteacher has inspired the staff to tackle the issues required for the school to become good with pace and a strong sense of urgency.

The school development plan has been fully endorsed by the new governing body. Although arrangements to monitor the priorities in the plan are clear, they are not precise enough to enable governors to evaluate the impact of the plan on improving pupils' academic achievement. High quality performance information, ensures resources are well deployed and have an even greater impact on raising pupils' achievement. An external review of the governing body was recommended at the time of the last inspection. This is no longer deemed necessary as the new federated governing body are very aware of the issues they face and have a high degree of knowledge and experience from which to draw on.

Support provided by the local authority has improved the quality of leadership at the school. The move to a hard federation brokered by the local authority enables the school to draw effectively on this extra support. This includes the support of a National Leader of Education. The current support plan is focused on developing the quality of teaching and shows clearly how this will be support through external lesson observation, work scrutiny and bespoke training over the forthcoming year.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure the school development plan includes how governors will evaluate the impact of actions taken on pupil outcomes.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Light

Her Majesty's Inspector