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28 June 2013

Julia Hall
Frobisher Primary and Nursery School
Frobisher Drive
Jaywick
Clacton-on-Sea
CO15 2QH

Dear Miss Hall

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Frobisher Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 28 June 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 April 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you, four members of the Governing Body, other senior leaders and spoke on the telephone to a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. You and two members of the Governing Body accompanied me on a tour of the school. We visited all the classrooms and spoke to pupils about their work. I looked at school documentation, including the action plan for improvement and pupil progress data.

Context

Since the inspection, there have been no staff changes, though three staff are leaving at the end of this term. You have appointed staff to replace them, including an additional teacher and two deputy headteachers, who will start in September 2013.

Main findings

You have been the substantive headteacher of Frobisher for eight months. In that time, you have put raising pupils' achievement and improving the quality of teaching at the heart of everything you are doing to improve the school. Your work is beginning to bear fruit. Pupils' progress is improving rapidly; but the standards they reach are still well below those reached by similar pupils in other schools. Pupils' attainment in reading, particularly in Key Stage 1, is much higher this year, a sign of the excellent work you are doing to improve the quality of teaching. You are clear that pupils' standards across the school are nowhere near high enough. You know that many Frobisher pupils do not reach their potential because of the uneven quality of teaching and low expectations of some staff. The recent inspection praised your strong leadership and your effectiveness in developing staff' skills and raising pupils' aspirations. This was justified. Your leadership is insightful. You are making excellent improvements to the quality of education provided at Frobisher. However, you also recognise that there is a long way to go.

During my visit, a group of Year 6 boys and their teacher visited your office to show you their writing. The boys' eagerness to share their work demonstrates how your love and knowledge of literature is motivating pupils and staff, your enthusiasm is contagious. Inviting highly skilled professionals, authors, musicians and artists to work in Frobisher is raising pupils' aspirations. Following intensive coaching, your staff are beginning to follow through with better quality teaching of the basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. When we visited a Year 6 classroom, the pupils were doing 'Bear Grylls' mathematics – working outside on 'chilli challenges' to do with 3D shapes. The pupils enjoyed choosing 'hot', 'spicy' or 'mild' levels of challenge for their problem solving. You are successfully developing a culture where teachers are presenting lessons imaginatively, which is motivating the pupils to want to learn.

On my tour of the school, I noticed the good quality of display and art in the corridors, classrooms and your office. You value the pupils and they want to please you by producing their best work. As we entered classrooms, two pupil 'meet us and greet us' hosts explained their work. They were polite and enthusiastic, showing increasing confidence and pride in their school.

Since the inspection, you have focussed most recently on improving behaviour in the playground and around the school, working with all staff using the book 'Inside I'm hurting'. You are keen to ensure adults work together to understand pupils' different emotional needs to bring out the best in them. You check that staff implement all agreed policies and plans effectively and pay attention to detail, which is why you are achieving success. I saw good behaviour in lessons, but not all pupils manage their own behaviour well in the playground, between classes and on the school bus. They need strong guidance from skilful staff.

Since you became headteacher, the Governing Body has restructured. You and the Chair of Governors have allocated a governor to monitor each area of improvement

in the school development plan and are working well with governors to ensure they know what questions to ask. Governors are planning training on pupil progress data so that they all understand what it is telling them about the quality of teaching. They recognise that the school is on a journey towards good, but that the starting point for the journey is very low indeed. They are under no illusions about how difficult it is to raise pupils' standards and how you need their challenge and support to ensure that all staff and departments within the school are providing good value for money.

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:

- develop staff knowledge and skills in teaching the basic skills of communication, reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum in order to raise pupils' achievement
- conduct a review of each department systematically to ensure it is providing good value for money and contributing effectively to improving pupils' achievement.

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

External support

The local authority was monitoring this school as they recognised that pupils' achievement was very weak. They appointed you as a temporary headteacher in April 2012, recognising your leadership strengths, supporting your promotion to substantive headteacher in October 2012. The local authority had the school on its list for academy sponsorship, but following the improvements the school is making and the positive Ofsted judgement it has put this plan on hold and the school will remain under local authority control. You have a strong network of schools, which are providing good support, including using the local teaching school and the 'Improving teacher programme' they provide. The local authority is providing good support through its regular monitoring visits.

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

Yours sincerely

Gill Jones (HMI)
Her Majesty's Inspector

PROTECT-INSPECTION



The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the 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.
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