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8 July 2013

Mrs H Harris
Headteacher
Woodstock School
Rectory Gardens
Bristol
BS10 7AH

Dear Mrs Harris

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Woodstock School

Following my visit to your school on 8 July 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 met with you, a number of staff with responsibilities, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement action plan was evaluated. The outcomes of the school's and the local authority's monitoring activities were taken into account. You and I did a tour of the school together.

Main findings

The school's internal and external moderations of the National Curriculum levels that pupils have attained have been verified recently by the local authority. The school's records show that pupils have made good progress this year improving their writing and developing their mathematics and science skills and knowledge.

Your school action plan focuses on the areas for improvement identified in the recent section 5 inspection. As part of this plan, you have established a set of non-negotiable expectations through a set of 'corporate' policies and practices. These are intended to secure a greater consistency in the quality of teaching across all classes,

which will raise expectations for all, and enable all staff to focus on pupils' learning and progress. We discussed how these could be made even more specific and include pre-written success criteria for different types of lessons and tasks.

You and the assistant headteacher have attended the Ofsted numeracy seminar, which you said was very thought provoking and helpful. Staff have also had other training in mathematics teaching. As a consequence, the school is looking at ways to ensure that better use is made of the outside environment to develop pupils' problem solving skills. The further training for staff related to English and pastoral care has begun to help drive school improvement. The new assessment programme is being effectively used to benchmark pupils' reading. This information is enabling the English leader to provide reading books that are at the correct level for each pupil. Pupils are beginning to enjoy their reading more as evidenced by the number of them that take their reading books home. However, the school is aware that pupils would benefit from using 'electronic tablet technology' to access a greater range of learning materials and to supplement the new books that the school has purchased. The school is not complacent. Although behaviour was judged to be good at the last inspection a more strategic approach to behaviour management has been introduced. Over the last six weeks, school records show that over 70% of pupils improved their attitude to their learning because of these changes. You have rightly identified that you now need to review and revise the behaviour policy to reflect these new ways of working.

You are getting external help and support to improve the quality of the teaching and learning, including support from an outstanding special school. In return, you are providing more external support for other local schools; although more needs to be done to reduce exclusions and long-term school absence in the locality, and increase attendance in the locality. The school has considered how this might be achieved, but some of the schools buildings hamper this development work and one floor cannot be used due to fire regulation restrictions. The Chair of the Governing Body reported that governors had found their training from the local authority useful and you also appreciate the opportunity to work with representatives from the local authority.

Senior leaders, working with the governing body and the local authority, are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- provide more modern technological equipment in order to enhance pupils' experience of its use and to extend the range of learning materials available to them
- work with the local authority to ensure that the school's buildings are used to maximise the available space
- provide more support for local schools in order to help them retain pupils in full-time education and reduce the exclusion rates in the locality, and increase attendance in the locality.

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 Local Authority for City of Bristol.

Yours sincerely

Steffi Penny
Her Majesty's Inspector