

PROTECT-INSPECTION

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11 July 2013

Fleur Greaves
Headteacher
Banners Gate Primary School
Coppice View Road
Sutton Coldfield, B73 6UE

Dear Mrs Greaves

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Banners Gate Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 10 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 January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the deputy headteacher, five governors, one of the local authority's school advisers and the partner headteacher of an outstanding school, a Local Leader in Education. A telephone discussion was held with a school improvement partner who has been consulting staff and governors. I met with the two teachers who manage English and mathematics. Action plans, monitoring records of teaching and assessments of pupils' progress were checked. We visited classes with the deputy headteacher and spoke to some pupils during lessons about their learning and progress.

Context

There have been significant changes to staffing since the school's inspection. Five staff have left, two of whom have moved on to promotion. Two staff joined in April.

Main findings

Leaders have already started to address the most urgent areas for improvement identified at the time of the school's inspection. Action plans rightly focus on

improving the proportion of good and outstanding teaching. Pupils' achievement in English and mathematics has risen compared with previous years, including an encouraging upturn in the attainment of pupils in Years 1 and 2 in phonics (letters and sounds). The governing body has recently formed a 'task force' which is stepping up the level of scrutiny it undertakes. Recent training for governors on the use of pupil performance data has improved their capacity to hold leaders and teachers to account. This marks a significant improvement to governance, even though an external review of the governing body has yet to take place. Further training is now needed to ensure that all governors are clear about their monitoring roles, and especially those who are linked to teachers and leaders who are responsible for subjects and phases of the school. The headteacher has been diligent and effective. She has ensured that the new phase leaders responsible for managing Key Stages 1 and 2 take on more responsibility for monitoring and supporting other teachers, as well as modelling best practice as they are highly skilled teachers in their own right. This is of enormous benefit to the school as it ensures continuity and builds on the good start already made.

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:

- implement effective training and support for the governing body and make sure that the external review takes place to sustain the current pace of improvement
- ensure that phase leaders and subject managers are trained to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in their respective areas of responsibility.

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 is providing effective support for the school. The headteacher is also using the services of consultants and advisers well as part of teachers' professional development. The partnership arrangement with the headteacher of an outstanding school is providing greater clarity for teachers about what constitutes good and outstanding achievement and teaching.

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

Charalambos Loizou
Her Majesty's Inspector