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16 July 2013

Mrs Janet Taylor
Headteacher
Grange Infant School
Franklin Road
Rowner
Gosport
Hampshire
PO13 9TS

Dear Mrs Taylor

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Grange Infant School

Following my visit to your school on 15 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, meetings were held with you, the deputy headteacher, middle managers, a member of the governing body and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's post-Ofsted action plans were evaluated. We undertook a learning walk together which involved brief observations of classes in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. The school's records of checks to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children were also scrutinised.

Context

Since the school's section 5 inspection two teaching assistants have started working at the school on a part time basis.

Main findings

Leaders, managers and governors have accepted the outcomes of the section 5 inspection. They recognise that the areas identified as being in need of improvement are the right priorities for the school. Senior leaders, managers and governors have already taken the following action:

- the headteacher has delegated responsibilities appropriately to middle managers
- middle managers are developing their role and are working more closely with teachers to help them to improve their practice
- more training is being provided to teachers to help them to know how to raise standards of writing and mathematics for their pupils; early signs of impact are particularly evident in mathematics
- governors have attended training to help them to gain a better understanding of published data about the school. They are already using this information to hold senior leaders more to account about the progress made by pupils.

The school's main post-Ofsted action plan is underpinned by separate additional plans linked to improving mathematics and literacy. Plans focus on the areas identified in the section 5 inspection report, as being in need of improvement. The school's main plan focuses appropriately on improving outcomes for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals as well as disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. However, not all of the plans include sufficient detail about how improvements will be made and how progress will be measured. Although leaders, managers and governors have a clear view of what the school needs to do to become good, this is not communicated clearly or strongly enough in all of the school's post-Ofsted action plans.

The school continues to ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. However, the post-Ofsted action plans need to be strengthened to communicate with absolute clarity the ambitions of leaders and governors that by July 2014:

- children will reach at least expected levels for their age by the end of Reception, particularly in writing
- by the end of Year 1 pupils will have made an average of six points progress in reading, writing and mathematics

- by the end of Year 2, pupils will have achieved at least age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, with a higher proportion than is currently the case, achieving Level 2A and Level 3 in all three subjects.

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 continues to provide effective support for the school. Leaders, managers and staff would nonetheless benefit from the brokering of additional support from other schools and local authority inspectors about how to further improve their practice.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Local Authority for Hampshire.

Yours sincerely

Gehane Gordelier
Her Majesty's Inspector