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Carol Green
Headteacher
Tivetshall Primary School
School Road
Tivetshall St Mary
Norwich
Norfolk
NR15 2BP

Dear Mrs Green

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Tivetshall St Mary 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 March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the data manager, the Chair of the Governing Body with three other governors, and the school's improvement adviser from the local authority. The partnership development plan and the school's post-Ofsted action plan were evaluated.

Context

The proposed partnership between the federation and a local primary school did not go ahead. The school remains in a hard federation with Burston Community School. You have now been appointed as the permanent headteacher and spend the equivalent of two days each week at Tivetshall. The teacher on secondment from a local school will leave at the end of this term and a new teacher will join the school from September. There is a new member on the governing body.

Main findings

A lot has happened since the inspection in March regarding leadership arrangements and the school is now in a settled position for September. These things have taken up a lot of time for you and the governing body but the focus on improving the quality of education has been maintained. As a result, the right things are in place to improve leadership, teaching and pupils' learning.

The post-Ofsted action plan very sensibly supplements the partnership development plan to focus on the most important areas for improvement alongside broader aspects for development. Importantly, the plans provide opportunities for staff to see provision in other schools so that they can reflect on what happens in their own classes. Arrangements are in place for the governing body and advisers to play a full part in checking the impact of actions. Some of the success criteria need to be sharper to make sure that the impact of actions is measured against targets for good teaching and good progress. You now have time that is set aside specifically for improving teaching at Tivetshall and by fixing dates in the calendar for what will happen and when, such as formal observations of lessons, staff and governors have a clear picture of their responsibilities within the action plans.

The governing body is now more active in seeking out their own evidence through visits to school, for example, the Chair worked with you on a scrutiny of science work. The curriculum sub-committee takes responsibility for evaluating the quality of teaching and pupils' learning but too much discussion takes place at meetings of the full governing body rather than the sub-committee taking ownership for this work.

Staff have discussed the areas identified for improvement at the inspection and have made some changes to the way that lessons are planned and how pupils present their work. There is now a full set of assessment for this academic year for reading, writing and mathematics and the data manager has established a spreadsheet to target and track pupils' achievements into the next academic year. This does not yet include assessments of pupils' attainments in other subjects.

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:

- measure the impact of actions against targets for good teaching and good progress
- make sure that the curriculum sub-committee plays a full part in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and pupils' learning
- track pupils' achievements in subjects other than literacy and numeracy.

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 improvement adviser maintains light-touch support to you and the governing body. Staff and governors make good use of the advice, for example to scrutinise pupils' work and then take action to address weaknesses. You have made some useful links with other schools to look at their good practice and this is helping teachers and governors to look at their own practice in relation to other small schools as well as larger primary schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Heather Yaxley
Her Majesty's Inspector