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18 September 2013

Rhodri Bowen
Headteacher
Aldermaston C. E. Primary School
Wasing Lane
Aldermaston
Reading
RG7 4LX

Dear Mr Bowen

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Aldermaston C. E. Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 18 September 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 June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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:

- strengthen the school's post inspection action plan so that the role of governors in evaluating the impact of actions to improve the school are made clear
- review and raise the level challenge in some of the targets that have been set for pupils' attainment and progress.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, a representative of the local authority and the Chair of the Governing Body plus two other governors to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's post inspection action plan was evaluated and I looked at documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work. I also accompanied you on a walk around the school visiting all the classrooms.

Context

Since the previous inspection one teacher and three teaching assistants have left the school and been replaced.

Main findings

You have reacted positively to the previous inspection report and are providing the school with clear and effective leadership. There is a positive climate within the school and senior leaders spoken to were committed to working towards the school being judged good as quickly as possible. You and senior leaders have written a post inspection action plan that identifies sensible and well-timed activities to drive improvement in the school. The plan contains suitably challenging and measurable success criteria against which the impact of actions to improve teaching can be measured. However, some targets for pupils' attainment and progress do not provide a sufficient level of challenge for all pupils. Procedures to monitor the impact of actions taken are clear; however, the role of governors in evaluating the impact of these actions is not sufficiently well defined in the plan.

You have established a firm foundation to improve teaching. The quality of teaching is being monitored regularly so that you are aware of the areas of strength and those requiring improvement. Good plans are in place to share and spread the good practice in the school through a coaching programme. Sensible plans are also being developed to work with good and outstanding schools in order to improve teaching and assessment practice.

The school has a clear focus on improving pupils' writing. For example, expectations have been raised and clarified regarding the presentation of pupils' work. There are also more opportunities for pupils to write during the course of the school day. In particular, pupils in Key Stage 2 are being provided with a greater range of opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing. Good systems are in place to track pupils' progress in writing and teachers are being suitably held to account for the progress they are making.

The governing body demonstrate a strong and determined ambition for the school to improve quickly. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and

weaknesses and have been suitably involved in the creation of the post inspection action plan.

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

Following the previous inspection the local authority sensibly increased the amount of support available to the school. They also allocated the school a new school improvement adviser. This adviser is providing helpful leadership and management advice and they are beginning to broker the available additional support to help drive improvement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for West Berkshire and the Diocese of Oxford.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sanderson
Her Majesty's Inspector