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25 September 2013

Ms Lesley Benson
Headteacher
Granville Plus Nursery School
Granville Road
London
NW6 5RA

Dear Mrs Benson

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Granville Plus Nursery School carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Following my visit to your school on 24 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 it was judged to require improvement at the section 5 inspection in June 2013.

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 action plan to provide clear targets that relate to children's outcomes and by which you and governors can measure the impact of the actions you are taking
- involve governors in monitoring specific actions in the plan through visits to the school to see the impact for themselves
- develop further prompts to help adults ask more focused questions about specific activities.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you and the deputy headteacher, a member of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I met with a group of staff and spent a short time observing the provision in the nursery, including the lunchtime arrangements. I looked at planning documents, minutes of

governors' meetings, records of training for staff and evidence from your observations of the quality of provision.

Context

You have reorganised staff teams to work in the different areas of the nursery, giving each team a balance of skills, experience and expertise.

Main findings

The action plan includes a range of appropriate actions that cover the areas for improvement from the inspection. It also contains actions for a wide range of other priorities identified by you and staff. It is essential that these additional priorities do not deflect you from the main task at hand. You and the deputy headteacher are responsible for leading many of the actions and it is important that you do not monitor the actions for which you are also responsible. The plan identifies the specific support that the local authority will provide as well as their role in monitoring the impact of the actions. The criteria by which the impact of the actions will be measured are not sharply focused on the children's outcomes.

You have raised expectations of staff by refining observations to reflect the Teachers' Standards for all staff, including those that are not qualified teachers. Staff were positive about the increased frequency with which you observe the quality of their teaching. Following these observations, you now set agreed actions based on aspects of teaching that need to be improved. Your daily learning walk to check the planned learning outcomes helps staff to reflect on what they have planned and how they intend to extend children's learning.

A range of training for staff is helping to promote consistency of practice. The visits you organised to outstanding schools gave staff many ideas about how they can improve the quality of interaction with children, especially through asking focused questions. Displays of general questions around the nursery act as prompts and could be developed further to provide prompts for specific activities. New approaches to planning are helping staff to think more carefully about the activities they provide. The focus on managing children's behaviour, and setting consistent expectations of good manners was evident in the calm atmosphere at lunchtime. Adults set a positive model of how to behave while eating. There is scope to give older children the chance to take responsibility for serving themselves and others.

Governors have resolved the health and safety issues raised at the inspection. Old equipment has been removed and the outdoor area is being developed further. Plans to formalise governors' visits to school are well founded and provide the opportunity for governors to develop a systematic approach to monitoring the impact of actions in the 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

The school had received no support, monitoring or oversight from the local authority in the two years before the inspection. This was because the school opted not to buy back the local authority's support following a considered decision by the governing body. Starting from this term, the local authority has devised a package of support for you and your staff, which will be monitored through the Rapid Improvement Group (RIG). This group will meet each half term to challenge the school's leaders and to review the impact of actions taken. The authority will undertake a review of leadership in October. You have benefited from attending a 'Getting to good' seminar run by Her Majesty's Inspectors and have made use of several Ofsted publications and good practice examples from Ofsted's website. Well-established links with local schools enable staff to observe good practice.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Wotherspoon
Her Majesty's Inspector