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Tim Burgess
Headteacher
The Chandler CofE Aided Junior School
Middlemarch
Roke Lane
Godalming
Surrey
GU8 5PB

Dear Mr Burgess

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Chandler CofE Aided Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 9 October 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:

- set targets for the proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics
- set specific targets to further reduce the gap between the achievement of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and all other pupils at the school
- clarify who is going to evaluate which aspects of the school's improvement, how and when.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other leaders, four governors including the Chair 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 visited every class to see the pupils at work. I scrutinised a number of documents, including information about pupils' achievement, records of lesson observations made by leaders, and examples of teachers' planning. I looked closely at a sample of pupils' books.

Context

Three teaching assistants have left the school since the inspection and one teacher has started.

Main findings

The headteacher has rightly set high expectations about the pace of improvement. As a result, leaders are acting urgently to make improvements. A programme of appropriate training for teachers and teaching assistants is in place. Consequently, teaching and pupils' achievement are beginning to improve. Teachers are starting to plan lessons that are more precisely matched to pupils' abilities so that all pupils, including the more able, are stretched. Teachers and teaching assistants are beginning to question pupils more effectively in order to promote pupils' thinking. Teachers' marking is improving, since pupils are now more aware of what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Increasingly, pupils are given opportunities to act on teachers' advice. Leaders, including middle leaders, regularly check on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. The process for checking teachers' performance has been revised and is now more rigorous.

Governors continue to challenge and support school leaders effectively. They have a detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The Chair of the Governing Body played an important part in the development of the school improvement plan following the inspection. This plan addresses all of the areas for improvement effectively. However, whilst targets for improvements in pupils' achievement have been set, these need to be sharpened to show the proportions of pupils that will make and exceed expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. There also needs to be a sharper focus on reducing the gap between the achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils. In addition, it is not always clear who will be evaluating improvements, how this will be done and when.

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 headteacher is making good use of the effective support provided by the local authority. The leadership partner helped develop the action plan, and he visits the school regularly to give advice and to check the progress being made. He is also contributing to improvements in reading and writing. A consultant is working effectively with teachers, teaching assistants and leaders to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics. The local authority challenges school leaders effectively through regular meetings to monitor and evaluate improvements.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Haynes

Her Majesty's Inspector