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Bobbie Caisley
Bradwell County Primary School
Cauldon Avenue
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Dear Mrs Caisley

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bradwell County Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 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 5 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:

- ensure governors receive training to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively
- ensure the school action plans include governors in the monitoring and evaluation procedures
- ensure the attainment and progress of more able pupils is rigorously tracked.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the deputy headteacher, representatives from the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the consultant headteacher. The school action plans were evaluated, a number of short visits were made to lessons and school documentation was examined.

Context

Since the last inspection, two class teachers have resigned and a new chair and vice chair of governors have been appointed. Roles and responsibilities in the senior leadership team have altered with new subject leaders for English and mathematics. A newly qualified teacher has also been appointed to the school.

Main findings

You have quickly put in place strategies to help the school to improve. You have a close working relationship with the deputy headteacher and you are clear about what the school needs to do in order to secure a good judgement at the next inspection. You have focused your efforts on improving the quality of teaching and have rigorous procedures in place to tackle any weaknesses identified within teaching.

A new action plan has been written, closely linked to the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The plan includes actions, monitoring procedures and measurable milestones. The plan indicates realistic timescales to show how you will improve the school. Although key governors are involved with monitoring the success of the actions, this is not documented as well as it should.

Plans are in place to improve the quality of teaching and effective links have been made with a local good school. There has been a focus on improving teachers' planning and how lessons can better meet the needs of all learners. The consultant headteacher is providing valuable support, including monitoring the quality of teaching.

You have a rigorous monitoring cycle to assess the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. You and senior leaders carry out a range of monitoring activities and provide teachers with useful feedback on how to improve their teaching. Where weaknesses are identified, there are coaching and mentoring strategies in place to support teachers to improve. Staff meetings are carefully planned for and focus on the school priorities.

Careful tracking of data is carried out and the progress of some groups is analysed. This provides governors with a useful insight into how pupils are performing. Although these systems are developing, you are not evaluating the progress of some groups sufficiently, for example, more able pupils.

Governors have the confidence in the leadership team to bring about school improvement. A skills audit is underway to look at the different experiences and qualities that governors bring. A new chair and vice-chair of governors have been appointed, although to date, they have received little training to support them in their roles. Plans are in place to develop a governing body action plan which will show how the governing body will develop. Governors receive a range of information from the headteacher and you and governors report that the governing body is getting better at asking pertinent questions.

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 is providing support and challenge to the school. They regularly monitor the school's performance through 'core group' meetings. They assist you and senior leaders to monitor the quality of teaching and have facilitated links with a good school. Plans are in place for the local authority to provide training to the governing body. The consultant headteacher has developed plans to help you with your work in school. All support is well received.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward
Her Majesty's Inspector