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Iain Peden
Uppingham CofE Primary School
Belgrave Road
Uppingham
LE15 9RT

Dear Mr Peden

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Uppingham CofE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 14 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 May 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 urgent further action to:

- strengthen leadership and management through revising the roles and clarifying the responsibilities of all members of the senior team
- devise and implement a coaching plan for all teachers whose practice requires further improvement
- devise and implement a support plan for all pupils who have been identified as falling behind with their work.

Evidence

During the visit I met with you, members of the senior leadership team and the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. I evaluated the school improvement plan and a range of documentation. This included the school's evaluations of its own performance, data relating to pupils' attainment and progress as well as minutes of recent governing body meetings. You took me on a tour of the school and we made brief visits to a range of classes.

Context

Since the previous inspection in May 2013, there have been no significant changes in school leadership or staffing. The school has entered into a partnership with a National Leader of Education who is the headteacher of a neighbouring outstanding school.

Main findings

During the visit we worked closely together to explore and identify the reasons why the school is not yet good. We agreed that accelerating the pace and progress of pupils' learning in lessons is of vital importance, particularly at Key Stage 1 and for pupils of high ability. This means ensuring that more lessons are good or outstanding.

The senior leadership team and governing body have responded positively to the judgement that the school requires improvement. Many essential actions required for improvement are already underway. These include:

- the introduction of a new system for tracking pupils' progress that gives a clear overview of progress across the school
- the early identification of pupils who are behind in their work and require additional support
- training to improve the quality of teaching
- strengthening the accountability of teachers by requiring each of them to ensure good quality teaching and good rates of progress in their classes.

While much work has been done since the inspection, there is still more to be done before everything is in place for lasting improvement. Most importantly, you need to strengthen the leadership and management of the school so that responsibility for school improvement can be shared more widely across the team. It is important that you get on with this work immediately.

A post-inspection action plan has been written aimed at addressing the two recommendations from the last report and actions are underway. The priorities in this plan lacked measurable targets with milestones. These targets were added during the monitoring visit, including numerical targets for teaching and learning, and for pupils' progress. This will enable you and your governors to monitor progress more effectively.

Governors are well-involved in the efforts to improve the school. They play a key role in evaluating the effectiveness of the actions. They should be helped to do this through regular reports from you and your local authority officer on the extent to which you are achieving the two main aims relating to improved teaching and to improved progress. Reference to how close you are to the milestone targets expressed in your action plan will provide you with tangible evidence of this progress.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection. I therefore intend to return in the summer term to evaluate the teaching across the school, and the progress that the pupils are making. I will then report to governors on the progress that the school is making in carrying out the improvements necessary to become a good school.

External support

The local authority officer knows the school well, has a clear view of what is required in the school to secure good outcomes for pupils, and is already working with school leaders to achieve this. She has arranged support from a local outstanding school to support improvements in teaching and learning, and aspects of leadership across the school. Further support is planned through the provision of consultancy from an external 'schools' alliance'. The local authority officer will also provide termly summary reports to the governors on the overall quality of teaching and pupils' rates of progress across the school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Rutland and to The Diocese of Peterborough.

Yours sincerely

Trevor Riddiough
Her Majesty's Inspector