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17 October 2013

Mrs Helen Ridge
Hempshill Hall Primary School
Armstrong Road
Hempshill Vale Estate
NG6 7AT

Dear Mrs Ridge

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hempshill Hall 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 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.

Evidence

During the visit I met with you, members of the senior leadership team and members of the Governing Body. I also met with the Local Leader of Education attached to the school and held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority. I evaluated the school improvement plan and a range of documentation. This included the school self-evaluation form, data relating to students' 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 all classes in the school.

Context

Since the previous inspection in May, two new assistant headteachers have been appointed and the senior leadership team's roles and responsibilities have been restructured.

Main findings

Your ambition and determination to become a good school is widely shared across the staff and the governing body. All staff are highly committed and are working hard towards getting to good and better as soon as possible. Following the inspection, you have built up momentum and this has resulted in swift improvement in a very short time. All staff and governors have a clear view of what is required to improve further. They know that ensuring good rates of progress for all pupils is the key.

You were prompt to compile an action plan to address the recommendations raised in the inspection report. The plan is tightly focused on exactly what needs doing in the coming year. Clear milestones provide a means by which success can be measured each term. This will enable you and the governing body to check on your progress throughout the plan easily.

All the essential actions required for improvement are already underway. These include:

- an extensive staff development programme
- training for teachers in marking and assessing pupils' work
- improved monitoring of planning to ensure challenge in every class
- setting higher expectations of progress across each year and key stage which are clear and measurable
- providing data in a form that gives a clear overview of progress across the school
- fine-tuning arrangements through the performance management of staff to hold teachers to account for teaching quality and pupils' progress
- equipping the governing body with the skills and tools that they need to become fully involved in supporting and challenging the school to become good.

As a result of these actions, tangible improvements are already evident. Achievement has risen significantly since the last inspection in May. Unvalidated assessments results for 2013 show that attainment is above the national average at Key Stages 1 and 2. The rates of progress pupils make have also risen to above those expected of them in most, but not yet all, measures across the school. Teaching has also improved and many instances of inspiring, active and engaging teaching were seen during my tour of the school. This is backed by your own records made during regular checks carried out since the last inspection.

Governors receive regular information on all aspects of the school's work. Evaluations of the school's performance are accurate and honest. Governors are

clear about what requires improvement and how this is to be achieved. Most importantly, the governors are now better equipped understand how well the school is doing and how to support and challenge the school along the way.

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 and was quick to make the necessary arrangements to respond. She has given a useful steer on the formulation of the action plan and provided consultant support to improve subject leadership. She has arranged support from a local leader of education from a good school to support improvements in teaching and learning, and aspects of leadership in the school. The school also receives high quality support from an external consultant. He provides termly checks on the progress you are making towards meeting the priorities set out in your action plan to become a good school.

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

Yours sincerely

Trevor Riddiough
Her Majesty's Inspector