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Mr Grant Strudley
Headteacher
Wildmoor Heath School
Lower Broadmoor Road
Crowthorne
RG45 7HD

Dear Mr Strudley

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Wildmoor Heath School

Following my visit to your school on 22 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:

- ensure that in all lessons teachers
 - provide a high level of challenge for all pupils.
 - manage classroom activities efficiently and effectively to guarantee that all pupils complete enough good quality work.
- add more urgency to the planned improvements.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior and middle leaders, the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plans were evaluated.

Context

There have been no significant changes at the school since the last inspection.

Main findings

Action plans are suitably focussed on the areas identified as requiring improvement at the last inspection. The plan has clear targets to raise the attainment and progress of pupils. The end-of-year targets for pupils in Year 6 are challenging.

Your plans show what you intend to do and the difference you expect these actions to make. You have correctly focused on raising pupils' achievement by improving the quality of teaching. While the planned actions are appropriate the sense of urgency that is necessary for your school to be securely good by time you are next inspected is not yet apparent. It would be helpful if your plan included reference to ambitious timescales for the various steps you intend to take. This would regularly show you whether you are on track to meet your overall goal of being 'good' by this time next year.

There are some early signs that the quality of teaching is improving but there is still too much that requires improvement. Brief lesson observations during this inspection showed that some teaching is not yet fully effective or efficient in raising pupils' achievements.

There is now a clear method to monitor the quality of the school's work. This includes regular lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and the analysis of pupils' progress. The detailed interpretation of information from these activities is still in its early stages. Written records of monitoring activities are not always focussed sharply enough on how well teaching is improving pupils' progress. Although this information is giving senior leaders a much better view of the quality of the school's work it is not leading to some 'short and sharp' improvement targets to quicken the pace of change.

A programme of professional development is enabling teachers to observe high quality practice in other schools and improve their subject knowledge for teaching mathematics, writing and phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they make). The quality of phonics teaching has improved.

The deputy headteacher and middle leaders are much clearer about their roles in raising standards. They now have clearly defined responsibilities to manage their teams and are aware that their own performance management is linked to the success of their teams. The headteacher has made it clear that pay rises are not automatic.

Governors have a good knowledge of the school. They have built on the improvements identified at the last inspection. The governing body has strengthened its expertise and is not only improving its procedures to monitor the work of the school but it is also taking a longer view about the school's future direction. It is not clear in every part of the school improvement plan exactly how the governing body will check the progress towards each specific target.

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 correctly beginning to step back a little to ensure that senior staff develop their own capacity to improve the school. Good support has been provided to check the quality of teaching. This has helped to ensure that senior leaders have an accurate view of how well teachers are performing and how well pupils are learning. Regular meetings between senior officers of the local authority and the school ensure that the headteacher and governors remain focussed. The local authority has been influential in ensuring that the governing body has strengthened its expertise by appointing an additional, very experienced governor who has now taken-on the role of Chair.

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

Yours sincerely

Daniel Towl
Her Majesty's Inspector