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Nickie Forrest
Normandy Primary School
Fairford Avenue
Barnehurst
Bexleyheath
DA7 6QP

Dear Mrs Forrest

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Normandy Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 24 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 July 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:

- update the improvement plan to include precise monitoring and evaluation to check all pupils make rapid progress
- ensure consistent expectations for outdoor learning between the nursery and reception classes.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, senior and middle leaders, new teachers, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan, other documents, achievement and attendance data were evaluated. You accompanied me on a tour of the school.

Context

Since the last inspection seven newly qualified teachers and two new middle leaders have been appointed.

Main findings

The headteacher and her leadership team are determined the school will be judged as good at the next inspection and continue the work accomplished so far in improving the school's overall effectiveness.

The school improvement plan is detailed. It shows a wide range of appropriate strategies to achieve each priority. The success criteria indicate the challenging targets necessary to secure significant improvement. Staff understand these increased expectations and their role to implement the action plan. School leaders and governors monitor the plan but greater precision is needed in the way they check pupil progress at each agreed milestone.

The school has analysed 2013 achievement data. Tracking systems are newly developed since the inspection. This means that leaders and teachers are now clearer about progress in English and mathematics. Leaders identify aspects of improved achievement in reading, mathematics and better outcomes for pupils who receive additional support but they acknowledge that there is more to be done to ensure that increased rates of progress are secured for all pupils.

Staff mobility is high. Professional development is a central theme running through the action plan. Newly qualified teachers report favourably about the support they receive from their mentors. They receive guidance about how to use pupil data in planning to raise expectations for all groups of pupils. They feel more confident as a result. Newly appointed leaders have brought new ideas to the school and these are having a positive impact upon the quality of teaching. Planning now includes specific differentiated questions to challenge different groups of learners. Staff training in the use of mathematical resources, marking and moderation of pupils' work has raised awareness of the need for greater pupil engagement in lessons. Staff have also benefitted from links to a local teaching school where workshops and visits help them to develop their own practice in identified areas.

School leaders have increased the frequency of monitoring visits to lessons. They are aware that there are still inconsistencies in expectations and practice. There are still differences in the quality of outdoor provision and between the nursery and reception classes for example.

The school has further developed systems to monitor attendance and punctuality. There is more communication with families through newsletters, parent fast track

meetings and a new texting service. Attendance and punctuality to school have increased noticeably this term.

Governors have been involved in the school's improvement over time. They are aware of the importance of the latest inspection judgement. They show a strong commitment to ensure the school continues to improve and at a faster rate than previously. They are beginning to ask more challenging questions about the impact of the school's work upon the rates of progress for all pupils. They acknowledge that their monitoring and evaluation of the school action plan needs to be more robust in order to strengthen their strategic overview of its overall effectiveness..

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 school has received effective support from the local authority since the last inspection. The local authority has provided a new link adviser who has undertaken an accurate analysis of the school's performance with senior leaders. This has been used to draft the school improvement plan. Regular Partnership Board meetings monitor and challenge the school's progress to meet its long term objectives. The local authority has agreed to source additional mathematics consultancy this term.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann Debono

Her Majesty's Inspector