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13 November 2013

Mrs Tina Matthews
Hurst Drive Primary School
Hurst Drive
Cheshunt
EN8 8DH

Dear Mrs Matthews

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hurst Drive Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12 November 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 incisive and urgent action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- Ensure that performance management arrangements improve the quality of teaching.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and your deputy, members of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, and the headteacher of the partner school to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. HMI invited the senior staff to join him in the joint observation of teaching. Two lessons were evaluated and the views put forward by senior staff matched the judgements given by the inspector. HMI also reviewed the pupils' work from the classes visited.

Context

Two new teachers were appointed at the beginning of the autumn term to replace staff who have left the school.

Main findings

The outcomes of the 2013 Key Stage 1 and 2 national tests were not available to the inspection team when they visited the school last June. However, the results of the Early Years Foundation profile, the Year 1 Phonics test, the Year 2 Phonics re-test and the outcomes of the Key Stage 1 national tests and teacher assessments were significantly below the national average. Far too many pupils failed to reach the standards expected for their age.

Results at Key Stage 2 were below expectations in reading and mathematics but in line with the national average for writing and in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Overall, the measure of pupil progress Key Stage 1 to 2, the 'value added', was just below the national figure. However, the results for reading were significantly below; the national figure for boys, those on roll for the last two years, and those whose first language is not English. The school cannot afford to produce such inconsistent results in the 2014 national tests.

HMI invited senior staff to join in the joint observation of teaching and the views they expressed matched the judgements given by the inspector. However, one lesson required improvement because the structure of the main task did not allow enough time for pupils to write. Similarly, an effective lesson missed the opportunity to record a higher grade because the teacher did not refine the task to provide additional challenge and secure outstanding progress.

The headteacher and representatives of the governing body reported that the school has faced industrial action by staff refusing to provide lesson plans and permit senior staff to observe teaching. The governing body must make it clear to all staff that they must comply with the performance management requirements of their contract and produce teaching that meets the current Teaching Standards published by the Department for Education. The headteacher has the right to observe teaching at any point in the school year in order to meet her legal responsibilities for the quality of the pupils' education.

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

Effective support has been provided by local authority advisors and human resources professionals. The link with a high performing local school is a very positive step.

PROTECT-INSPECTION



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

Yours sincerely

David Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector