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Jenny Davies
Headteacher
Oakdale Junior School
Oakdale Road
Redbridge
London
E18 1JX

Dear Miss Davies

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Oakdale Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 22 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 September 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 standards continue to rise, particularly across upper key stage 2 and in mathematics, by measuring the impact improvements are making
- embed new middle leadership roles and responsibilities to ensure standards of teaching across the school improve quickly
- identify and support the individual needs of pupils with disabilities, special educational needs or those eligible for the pupil premium funding, so that they make good progress

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the deputy headteacher, a group of middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan and other documents were evaluated. I also joined you on a tour of the school.

Context

There have been some staffing changes since the inspection. The acting deputy headteacher has now been appointed to her post on a permanent basis. An assistant headteacher has also been appointed to take responsibility for inclusion and will take up his post in January. All middle leadership roles have been reviewed and new responsibilities agreed. Teachers who have been absent due to long term sickness or maternity leave will all have returned to their posts by the end of this term.

Main findings

Your improvement plan links closely to the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. While targets and priorities have been correctly identified, you need to be clearer about how you will check that your actions are improving pupil achievement and rates of progress. This will help leaders and governors to monitor improvements more closely and identify any further changes that are necessary.

Pupil achievement and rates of progress improved slightly last year. However, you are aware that further rapid and sustained improvements need to be made to address inconsistencies across year groups, particularly in years 5 and 6. You have correctly identified that further improvements are necessary in mathematics and are now targeting interventions carefully so that pupils can make up lost ground and fill any gaps in their knowledge and understanding. You monitor pupil progress rates carefully by meeting with teachers, checking pupils' books, analysing assessment information and undertaking regular teaching observations. Closer monitoring of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs or those supported by the pupil premium funding, will allow you to track how much progress they are making from their different starting points .

You have restructured the middle leadership team and new roles and responsibilities have been agreed. This will allow both senior and middle leaders to have a bigger impact on improving standards of teaching. Middle leaders feel they are more effective due to improved clarity about their roles and time to carry out their responsibilities. They are working closely with senior leaders to coach and support new or less experienced teachers. A planned programme of professional training, opportunities for teachers to work alongside each other and regular lesson

observations followed by helpful feedback, are increasing the amount of good or better teaching across the school.

You have enlisted the support of parents by sharing the areas for improvement identified within the inspection report with them and participating in a parental question and answer session. This has allowed them to share your vision for the school and to understand why you need to make further improvements.

Governors provide good levels of support and challenge to you and other leaders. They have reviewed the roles that they undertake and have closely aligned themselves to specific improvement areas. They are informed about how much progress all pupils should be making because they are able to use and understand the assessment information provided by school leaders. They play an appropriate role in the performance management of staff and are working closely with leaders to raise standards across the school as quickly as possible.

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

You feel that the school is well supported by the local authority. Advisors have provided training for leaders and managers, including undertaking joint observations of teaching to agree where strengths and areas for further improvement are. They have also advised on performance management, assisted with developing subject leadership in English and mathematics, helped staff to improve their planning and shared good practice in teaching pupils with English as an additional language. Additionally, you have provided staff with opportunities to attend external training courses linked to their own professional development. You have also undertaken a moderation exercise, involving teachers from other schools, to confirm that pupils work is being accurately assessed.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley Cox
Her Majesty's Inspector