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Anita Bandey
Deeping St Nicholas Primary School
Main Road
Deeping St Nicholas
PE11 3DG

Dear Mrs Bandey

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Deeping St Nicholas Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 3 December 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report my findings. 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 in October 2013 it was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Despite the relatively short period since the recent section 5 inspection, senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified. The school should take further action to:

- produce a plan for exactly when a range of different quality assurance monitoring activities will take place, who will conduct them and how the results will be evaluated
 - ensure that the feedback to teachers from this activity is accurately diagnostic, identifying exactly which areas of practice are strengths and which require improvement
 - link each area of improvement to specific, short-term professional development activities that will help bring about rapid improvement and sharing of best practice
 - bring forward issues identified at previous monitoring activity to ensure that improvements are being made and consolidated

- ensure that actions implemented as part of the school improvement plan, such as the 'good to be green' behaviour system and the new

marking policy, are quickly and professionally evaluated so that their impact becomes clear and modifications, if required, can be made

- use the opportunities created as part of the collaborative partnership to build the skills and capacity of leaders across the school so that all become more skilled in evaluating and improving the work of others
- develop some more visual ways to communicate attendance and attainment information to pupils, parents and governors so that this has a greater impact on motivation and understanding

Evidence

During my visit, I met with you, the Governing Body, a group of pupils and I spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plan and the school's systems for monitoring the progress of pupils and the quality of teaching. I also toured the school with you and visited all the classes while they were at work.

Main findings

This monitoring visit took place only four weeks after the section 5 inspection. Despite this short period, leaders and governors have already brought about some noticeable changes. A new system to help improve motivation and behaviour was introduced as a pilot in the Year 4, 5 & 6 class shortly before the inspection. Called 'good to be green' the pupils said that this had already had an impact in improving behaviour. Teachers have also begun work on improving the ways in which pupils respond to their marked work. There was evidence in pupils' books of this having started and of pupils making corrections or adding to their work to complete it or consolidate their learning. Parents have been engaged in seeking to improve rates of attendance. All have received a letter and statistics showing the attendance of each year group were sent home after three weeks. Additional time has been purchased from the educational welfare officer to tackle some persistent absence.

The governing body has looked hard at its own way of working, following discussions with the local leader of education who worked with the school for a period. Further training for governors has been arranged to help them gain better skills in monitoring the work of the school. Leaders have rewritten the school development plan to include the additional areas for improvement identified at the inspection.

The school development plan includes all the key elements and includes ambitious targets. Leaders and governors are very much aware of the need for urgent improvement. The school's systems for checking on the progress of pupils are good enough.

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 drawn upon three sources of additional support. A local leader of education from a Grantham school worked with the headteacher and governing body for a period last year. The school is an active member of a rural schools partnership with five other local schools. The local authority has been able to offer additional support including providing some additional training for the governing body and supporting the headteacher in checking the quality of teaching. Good use has been made of all of these.

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

Yours sincerely

John Peckham
Her Majesty's Inspector