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Ben Foley
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Foley

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Green Dragon Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12 December 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 October 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 action to:

- sharpen the post-Ofsted action plan action by stating who will monitor actions and the success criteria at each check point so leaders, governors and the local authority can evaluate their impact
- increase the urgency and effectiveness of the actions being taken to improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 and improve the quality of teaching mathematics across the school so it is consistently good or better in all year groups.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 phase leaders and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I spoke informally with pupils when I joined you in making some brief visits to lessons. I evaluated your post-Ofsted action plan and reviewed other relevant documentation.

Context

There have not been any staffing changes since the last inspection.

Main findings

You have responded effectively to tackling the areas for improvement highlighted in the section 5 report and you are determined to bring about improvement as quickly as possible. The school action plan addresses the priorities identified in the last inspection and clearly outlines the steps you are taking to make improvements. However, the plan does not identify the staff responsible for monitoring actions or outline the success criteria at each check point which will support you to hold staff accountable.

Since the last inspection you have changed the way teachers mark pupils' work and this is helping to improve their learning. Learning goals and success criteria are shared with pupils, against which they assess their learning. Coaching by the phase leaders to support teachers' planning has improved pupils' engagement in lessons.

Teachers have started using information from pupil progress checks to plan work so it is better matched to pupils' abilities. However, work for most able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging. The school rightly intends to evaluate the use of additional adults and the quality of their work so their support of pupils with different abilities is improved.

Teachers have developed pupils' extended writing skills by refocusing how they use 'writing target sheets' in English and across subjects. Evidence from pupils' work books shows that their extended writing is improving. You rightly recognise reading is an area the school still needs to develop further. The English coordinator has produced 'reading target sheets to improve how teachers' identify and tackle pupils' weakness in reading. These will be piloted in Year 6 before being cascading across the school.

The school has focussed on improving teachers' use of their mathematics work scheme. Teachers are starting to adapt activities so most able pupils are beginning

to be better challenged. However, mathematics teaching is not good enough in all year groups.

Target setting has improved and the progress of individuals and pupil groups is now being tracked through a half-termly pupil progress meeting. Pupils' targets are ambitious but realistic and teachers are more accountable for pupils' progress.

You have made good use of external support to improve the accuracy and reliability with which senior and phase leaders monitor teachers' work. They have received coaching on how to judge the quality of teaching, improve the accuracy of teachers' assessment and how to evaluate the progress pupils make when looking at work in pupils' books. However, the impact of the action being taken to improve teaching in Key Stage 1 is not rapid or effective enough.

An external review of governance, completed just before this visit, has identified the strengths and improvements governors need to make to challenge leaders more effectively. Governors have received data training so they can ask pertinent questions to assess pupils' progress. A governors' school visit policy is in place and provides them with a helpful strategy to enable them to see first-hand how well teaching is improving and the impact of leaders in bringing this about. Governors recognise the importance of having an external perspective and they are drawing on reports from the local authority to hold the school's leaders to account.

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 are well supported by the local authority. The support from the school improvement officer is helping leaders to accurately monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement. This has been done by completing teaching and learning reviews with the local authority officer. Leaders have also been trained how to coach staff to improve their classroom practice. The local authority continues to help the school to evaluate the impact of its actions through termly Raising Achievement Plan meetings

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

Yours sincerely

Pamela Fearnley
Her Majesty's Inspector