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13 January 2014

Mr Tim Eastwell
Headteacher
Lincewood Primary School
Berry Lane
Langdon Hills
Basildon
Essex
SS16 6AZ

Dear Mr Eastwell

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lincewood Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 10 January 2014, 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 November 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:

- accelerate the progress of pupils in Year 5 and close the gaps in attainment between boys and girls
- improve the guidance to teachers following lesson observation, by providing more subject-specific detail and by giving examples to show how particular aspects of teaching led to good learning
- ensure that attendance and attainment reports to governors include data relating to key groups of pupils, such as boys, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium grant.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, subject leaders, members of the Governing Body and representatives of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. Three lessons were observed with you for 20 minutes each. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

Main findings

Since the school was judged to require improvement, senior leaders and governors have adapted the school improvement plan to address the areas where the school most needs to improve.

Pupils' attainment and progress are now checked more frequently. Accurate assessment is being ensured by comparing pupils' work between classes and with other schools. Senior leaders and subject leaders analyse the assessment data to identify trends in the performance of different groups of students. Meetings are held every half term with class teachers to review the progress of every pupil. As a result teachers now have a better understanding of data and are increasingly pro-active in identifying pupils who need extra support and in devising ways of helping them.

The quality of teaching is being improved through an intense programme of professional development, mixing individualised guidance and support for staff with clear expectations about planning and marking. Teachers are being paired with colleagues within and beyond the school to share good practice. Phase leaders, the inclusion manager and subject coordinators are now more involved with monitoring the quality of teaching and its impact on learning. The influence of this work is already evident in a higher proportion of lessons being judged as good or better.

The school's internal assessments show that pupils in Years 4 and 6 have made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics since they began Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 3 have made good progress in writing and mathematics. However, the progress of Year 5 pupils has slowed slightly in the last term. The national curriculum assessments for 2013 showed that pupils made good progress from most starting levels. The progress of middle-ability pupils in writing and mathematics and of lower-ability pupils in reading was slightly below the national average.

Pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium grant are typically one to three terms behind other pupils. However, pupils in these groups who completed Year 6 last year had made similar progress to each other during Key Stage 2.

The governing body is increasing its involvement in monitoring and in holding senior leaders to account. For example, governors are demanding regular updates on attendance alongside pupil assessment information. This is because they are aware that attendance last year was below average, especially for boys, disabled pupils and

those with special educational needs, and pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium grant. Attendance has improved in the first term of this year.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection. The school has agreed to provide regular updates about pupils' attainment and progress and the quality of teaching. If the rate of improvement is sustained, consideration will be given to bringing forward the next inspection.

External support

The school is well supported and challenged by representatives of the local authority, including the headteacher of a successful Essex school. Good links have been made with other effective schools to share expertise and to plan for the new national curriculum. Two teachers are attending a programme to improve teaching provided by an outstanding local school.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen Abbott
Her Majesty's Inspector