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15 January 2014

Mrs Julie Phillips
Godwin Primary School
Finnymore Road
Dagenham
Essex
RM9 6JH

Dear Mrs Phillips

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Godwin Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 13 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 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 further action to:

- Sharpen improvement plans so that they include clear milestones and success criteria related to pupil achievement, against which the impact of actions can be systematically monitored and evaluated.
- Continue with the plans for regular focused monitoring by senior leaders to ensure that all inconsistencies in teaching and learning are addressed within the planned timescale, including the effectiveness of teaching assistants in supporting pupils in lessons.

Evidence

During the visit I met with you and the deputy headteacher, senior leaders, three members of the governing body and an officer representing the local authority. I

toured the school with you, spoke with pupils and looked at their work books. Additionally, a range of documents including action plans, pupil progress data, school monitoring evaluations, and professional development plans were scrutinised.

Context

Three new teachers have been appointed in Key Stage 1. The Governing Body is in the process of advertising the post assistant headteacher.

Main findings

You have continued with your plans to increase staffing to support the necessary improvements. This has included moving staff and changing some job roles and responsibilities to allow for more focused teaching and interventions. There are increasing opportunities for staff to work and plan together and share good practice. Continued professional development to improve teachers' practice in challenging pupils, and improve their marking has had good impact. A scrutiny of pupils' workbooks during the monitoring visit showed improvements in the written feedback given to pupils about their work. These improvements in marking are increasing pupils' understanding of how well they are progressing. A strong focus on literacy is improving pupils' grammar and presentation in writing across the school.

Pupils say writing topics are more interesting. Good examples of pupils' work are displayed in classrooms and around the school. Regular book reviews, classroom checks and the introduction of peer observations are presenting a more accurate view of teaching improvements and where further changes are required. However, leaders need to consider pupils' achievement when assessing how well teaching is improving over time. Additionally, leaders need to assess the effectiveness of teaching assistants in supporting pupils in lessons.

Following the section 5 inspection, you, and your senior leadership team have drawn up a detailed action plan which covers all the areas identified for improvement. The plan is further underpinned by subject leaders action plans for improving their areas of responsibility. However, some of this planning is imprecise: actions do not have clear milestones or success criteria against which their impact can be systematically monitored and evaluated. This will make it difficult to monitor the impact of the plan and hold staff to account.

School leaders say that the inspection has sharpened their focus. Consequently, they are following up, and evaluating actions, such as making repeated and regular focused checks on teaching and learning. You are supporting middle leaders to do the same. Half-termly pupils' progress meetings have been timetabled in order to hold staff to account and address underachievement more rapidly than before.

Members of the governing body know the school well and are clear about what needs to be done. They are keen to sharpen their monitoring skills by making

regular checks on the school's work and using data to ask probing questions about pupil progress. They have taken steps to record in more detail the challenges made to school leaders.

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 local authority is providing valuable support to enable the school to make the expected progress against the issues identified in the recent report. It holds regular meetings to challenge the school's leaders to improve the quality of education and to check that actions being taken are having the desired effect. Support for the school's leaders has been provided through a partner headteacher.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Barking and Dagenham and as below.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria
Her Majesty's Inspector