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Ms Angela White
Acting Headteacher
Feltham Hill Infant and Nursery School
Bedfont Road
Lower Feltham
Middlesex
TW13 4LZ

Dear Ms White

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Feltham Hill Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 17 January 2014, 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 in October 2013 when the school was judged to require improvement. The visit 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:

- improve the quality of observations made of children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage; use the assessment information from these observations to plan what children learn next and as a starting point to measure their progress over time
- ensure that governors' visits to the school focus more closely on evaluating the impact of key actions in the school's action plan.

Evidence

During the visit, I met you and other senior leaders, representatives from the governing body, and the consultant who works with the school on behalf of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I met a range of teaching and support staff at the end of the school day. I looked at the school's

action plan. You showed me the changes you have made to the learning environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage, to teachers' planning and to the system for tracking pupils' attainment and progress.

Context

The headteacher has been absent from school since the start of November. The deputy headteacher is acting headteacher and other staff have stepped up to take on leadership roles. Two classes in Year 2 are currently taught by supply staff.

Main findings

You and the staff have adopted a positive approach to tackling the issues from the inspection. Staff say that morale is high; they are working better as a team and sharing what works well for the children. They have confidence in your leadership and that of the senior team, and they appreciate the support you give them to improve. Staff report that pupils are more involved in learning than in the past. I saw for myself that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, both boys and girls, were engaged in a wide range of activities to develop their reading, writing and number skills. You know that there is more to do to improve the range of activities available outdoors.

The school's action plan includes appropriate activities that focus clearly on improving the quality of teaching. The plan includes specific dates when the impact of actions will be checked through assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Plans to produce a calendar of activities and for governors to align their meetings to coincide with the availability of assessment information are sensible.

You have made significant changes to the system for recording the information collected about pupils' attainment and progress. Supported by termly meetings in which the progress of each child is discussed, the system enables you and staff to identify quickly any child in danger of falling behind. Once identified, you take action to help such pupils catch up. This potentially helpful system is undermined by the variability in the quality, regularity and frequency of observations in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The result of these weaknesses is an incomplete, and potentially inaccurate, picture of the children's starting points and their progress over time.

The external review of governance has helped governors to recognise what they have not been doing well in the past and what they need to do in the future. Training will focus on how to interpret and ask more searching questions of the school's assessment information. The next step is to ensure that when governors visit the school they have a clear focus on checking an aspect of the action plan.

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 and the staff are keen to act on the advice and guidance offered by the local authority's consultant. Support for staff is already making a difference to the quality of their planning and is having a positive impact on what the children actually do in the classroom. Staff have benefited from visiting another school to see good practice and from sharing what they learnt with colleagues. The external review of governance has been well received by governors. It has provided the structure for a bespoke package of training from the local authority.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Wotherspoon
Her Majesty's Inspector