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Ms Anne Cooper
Headteacher
Bell Farm Primary School
Hersham Road
Hersham
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Dear Ms Cooper

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Bell Farm Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 21 January 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in October 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher as well as with the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. Recent information relating to the attainment and progress of pupils currently in the school were shared and discussed. The inspector was given a tour of the school and brief visits were made to all classes, where a number of pupils were spoken to about their work. The vetting checks on staff were also examined. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

Since the last inspection, an assistant headteacher has been appointed with responsibility for inclusion.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The leaders and governors of the school, with the support of the local authority, have responded promptly to the judgments of the recent inspection and are committed to securing the necessary improvements. Systems are in place to monitor pupils' progress at regular points and to provide a range of additional support to help pupils of all abilities.

Senior leaders are acting to support teachers to improve the quality of teaching by helping them make better use of assessment information about pupils so that lessons are planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Senior leaders are using a range of information, including the progress made by pupils, the work in pupils' books and what they observe in lessons to form an accurate picture of the quality of teaching. As a result they have a precise view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use this information to plan individual support for teachers. The school has a rigorous approach to self-evaluation.

The school's analysis of information for the autumn term shows that pupils in all year groups are making better progress than in previous years and in most year groups pupils are making good progress. This information identifies where pupils will need to make accelerated progress next term in order to make up lost ground and to reach the same levels as other pupils nationally.

Senior leaders are providing valuable support to help teachers to improve their work. For example, they are helping them to make better use of assessment information about pupils when they plan their lessons. As a result, lessons now meet different pupils' needs more closely. A review of a number of policies at the beginning of the year has established a consistent approach to many aspects of teaching. Marking seen in pupils' books is of particularly high quality because teachers' comments explain to pupils how they can improve and pupils frequently respond in detail to their teachers' comments. Equally, the presentation of written work in pupils' books reflects the pride they take in their work and the consistently high standard demanded by teachers.

Links have been made with other local schools to offer staff a range of valuable development opportunities. Many actions and initiatives including training on the use of problem solving approaches in mathematics lessons are being introduced.

The school improvement plan has been contributed to by senior leaders and the governors. It is directly linked to the priorities identified in the last inspection and closely reflects the local authority's plan.

The governing body has recently undergone a useful review, which has identified potential areas for development. The governors are undertaking a programme of school visits which is enabling them to observe and monitor different aspects of the school's work. The recent addition of an Advanced Skills Governor to the governing body has further strengthened their capacity to support and challenge senior leaders.

The local authority knows the school well and is providing a high level of support, guidance and expertise. The leadership partner meets with senior leaders every half term to review the school's progress and as a result continues to provide the school with the appropriate level of challenge and support.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Surrey and as below. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Moore
Her Majesty's Inspector