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30 January 2014

Mr Philip Craig
Headteacher
Rose Green Junior School
Raleigh Road
Rose Green
Bognor Regis
West Sussex
PO21 3NA

Dear Mr Craig

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Rose Green Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 30 January 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the 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.

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:

- Make the school development plan more precise in terms of who will monitor the actions taken and their impact, and what, exactly, success will look like at specific points in time so progress can be checked
- Increase the levels of challenge offered to pupils in mathematics

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the deputy and assistant headteachers and the Chair and vice chair of the Governing Body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority. The school development plan was evaluated. We walked around the school to look at teaching and pupils' work in lessons, and I looked through some pupils' exercise books to evaluate progress, marking and feedback. The school's single central record of staff checks was analysed following the appointment of two new members of staff.

Context

Two newly qualified teachers have joined the school since the last inspection. One is employed through an agency; the other is on a temporary contract to cover a maternity leave.

Main findings

Since the last inspection you have worked swiftly to address the issues for improvement. You have a clear and ambitious vision for the school which you have communicated effectively to staff and parents. This has resulted in positive levels of commitment from the vast majority of staff.

You correctly recognised the need to improve the progress of pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 very quickly, and have sensibly invested resources in focused training for teaching assistants to help with a programme of well-targeted intervention for those pupils that need it. Teaching assistants are thriving on the increased opportunities they now have to make more difference to the progress of pupils, and this is evident in their work in the classrooms too. Teachers and leaders have benefited from training on how to use information about pupils' progress in their teaching more effectively. Teacher assessment is more frequent and reliable and the analysis of how well pupils are learning has begun to make a difference to how teachers are planning lessons to challenge all groups of pupils.

Ensuring that pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding make better progress has been a priority. Your work on raising the awareness of all staff of the needs of these pupils has already shown a positive impact; in Year 6 they are now making progress in line with their peers in mathematics and reading.

You have combined your uncompromisingly high expectations of good and better teaching with a practical approach. For example, you have already organised a range of visits to and from other schools to support the development of your staff. The newly introduced coaching programme using the skills of outstanding teachers has already begun to take effect. You analyse the impact of staff training through

lesson observations, and relentlessly revisit any areas which are not improving at a rapid enough rate.

You have rightly focused on improving the standards of writing in the school as a priority. Teachers' planning has improved in this area to ensure that pupils have more opportunities to learn how to write well and at length. Pupils' books showed that writing has started to improve as a result of this. There was, as yet, limited evidence of high standards of writing around the school and in classrooms.

Marking and feedback to pupils remain inconsistent. Teacher comments and corrections do not always address all the mistakes made, for example in the misspelling of words or the incorrect use of capital letters. Sometimes the teacher's own use of grammar is not correct. This does not help pupils to improve the quality of their work. In mathematics, the level of challenge is not yet high enough for the most-able pupils. Some pupils reported that they found work too easy when we visited classrooms and work in some pupils' books showed limited progress and scruffy presentation.

You have begun to address the development of leadership skills with energy and have instigated a robust programme of analysis and review meetings with year leaders. Most now have an accurate grasp of their cohort's progress levels, and can identify which pupils need more support to make better progress. They are being held to account regularly by the assistant headteacher. Leaders are beginning to show a more strategic approach to using information. For example, they have started to match levels of performance of groups of pupils with the strengths of individual teachers and to deploy teachers accordingly.

An external review of governors by a National Leader of Governance has been arranged for early March. She has already visited the school and useful preliminary discussions have taken place with you and the chair of governors. Currently, not all governors share the confidence of the chair and vice chair to challenge and question you in an informed manner. You are aware that this is the case, and that it is a barrier to the school becoming good. You and the chair have already implemented changes in terms of the structure of governors' meetings to begin to tackle this issue. Governors recognise your strong analytical approach and your relentless drive to reach the highest standards. They have seen positive, early impact on the standards of pupils' writing on their visits to the school this term.

The school development plan focuses on the areas identified for improvement in the last inspection. However, those leaders that are responsible for actions in the plan are not yet precisely identified. Moreover, not all areas in the plan have sharp and measurable enough outcomes. This means that governors and others are not able to measure how well the school is performing easily enough. This prevents them from offering appropriate support and challenge to the school.

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 school improvement advisor has provided useful support for the school and for you in action planning and in the use of progress data. This has helped you to focus on the areas identified in the inspection report. Additional funding has also been provided to support improvements in achievement in Year 6. It is a positive move that the local authority will visit the school on a termly basis to monitor its progress towards becoming a good school.

You have used your previous contacts well to arrange useful visits to and from other schools in the area focusing on areas for improvement. Teachers bring back good ideas from these visits and are rightly expected to adapt their own practice in order to improve. The impact of this process is checked by the senior team through lesson observations.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Anwar
Her Majesty's Inspector