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10 February 2014

Ms Sue Hayward
Headteacher
Sir John Lillie Primary School
Lillie Road
London
SW6 7LN

Dear Ms Hayward

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Sir John Lillie Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 6 February 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 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:

- ensure that the recommendations from the external review of governance are fully implemented, so that governors are equipped with the skills needed to provide more effective support and challenge to school leaders
- include more precise targets for the progress of different groups of pupils at each key checkpoint in the school's action plan.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, subject and phase leaders, a representative from the local authority, the Vice Chair and two members of the Governing Body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection.

The school improvement plan, documentation relating to the monitoring of teaching, governing body minutes and tracking data were scrutinised. Brief visits were made with you, to lessons in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Context

Since the last inspection two permanent members of staff have been recruited. A new governor has joined the governing body. Currently, there is a vacancy for a parent governor.

Main findings

The headteacher and leaders have responded quickly to the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. According to teachers there has been a real 'step-change' in the expectations of leaders. All members of the school community are clear that the progress that pupils are making needs to accelerate more quickly. There are already more rigorous and effective systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching. The headteacher and senior leaders can demonstrate the improvements that are taking place. For example, the quality of marking has improved in a relatively short space of time. Most teachers are now checking that pupils follow up on the advice they are given about how to improve their work. This is helping pupils to improve their skills and understanding. However, inconsistencies remain and leaders are taking further actions to ensure that all teachers meet the same high expectations, including for more able pupils.

In order to identify accurately the progress that pupils are making, leaders have introduced more regular assessment checkpoints. Teachers now record information about pupils' progress every half-term. In some cases, where underachievement is identified, even more regular assessments have been put into place. This has enabled carefully targeted interventions to be used to improve pupils' progress. For example, leaders have rightly identified that writing in Years 5 and 6 need to improve rapidly and have already put additional resources in place to tackle this.

Middle leaders say that they are more confident about their roles. They have received effective support from senior leaders and external consultants to ensure that they are skilled in making judgements about the quality of teaching and its impact on achievement. There are regular, scheduled observations of teachers. More frequent book checks are used to evaluate pupils' progress over time. Middle leaders have provided support and training to teachers through team teaching and joint planning. The school's monitoring records show that the quality of teachers' planning and teaching is improving, as a result.

Leaders have taken action to improve the monitoring and recording of pupils' behaviour. A new incident form is being used to track incidents, which are being

analysed by senior leaders. No trends have been identified and individual concerns are followed up swiftly. The school's tracking shows that pupils' attendance is improving.

Since the last inspection governors have begun to increase the level of challenge to school leaders. They have carried out an audit of their skills to identify training needs. An external review of governance has recently taken place. There are clear recommendations about how governors should improve their practice and effectiveness. The review identified how governors should scrutinise the impact of the pupil premium on achievement more regularly. Governors are aware there is much to do and are committed to making the necessary changes in order to provide more effective strategic leadership of the school. They already have a clearer understanding of the progress pupils are making and the need to ensure that teachers are held fully to account for the achievement of different groups of pupils. They are less clear about the progress pupils should be making towards more challenging targets. This is because the school's action plan does not include precise milestones for pupils' progress at each assessment checkpoint.

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 school has received helpful and well-targeted support from the local authority. The school's local authority representative has supported the headteacher in developing a more effective action plan. She has visited the school to provide support and training for middle leaders. Together with further support from an external mathematics consultant, this has strengthened middle leaders' skills, so that they can identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching more securely. The local authority has also provided challenge to the school about its performance through 'school improvement board' meetings.

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

Yours sincerely

Russell Bennett
Her Majesty's Inspector