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Mrs Angela Hutchinson
Bournemouth Park Primary School
Bournemouth Park Road
Southend-on-Sea
SS2 5JN

Dear Mrs Hutchinson

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bournemouth Park Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 14 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 December 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:

- increase the frequency of lesson observations and ensure that teachers receive clear feedback about what went well and what needs to improve
- ensure that recommendations for improvement from lesson observations are followed up quickly to ensure matters have improved
- immediately draw up and implement support plans where teaching is less than good
- evaluate the progress pupils make in their books and check their attainment to ensure that teachers' assessments are accurate and reliable.

Evidence

During the visit, I met with you and other leaders. We toured the classrooms together. I met with four members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I looked at documents including the school's improvement plans, achievement data and records of your monitoring activities.

Main findings

Leaders have acted quickly to arrange an external review of governance, which identified training needs and priorities for the development of the governors role. Governors now receive clearer information about the progress and attainment pupils make.

There has also been an independent review of the use and impact of pupil premium funding. The review noted that gaps in attainment between pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils are closing in Years 5 and 6. However, there remain gaps in some other year groups.

The headteacher has looked beyond the school for examples of good practice. She has made links with a successful school in Southend-on-Sea and one in East London. As a result of visits to these schools, leaders have realised that expectations at Bournemouth Park Primary School have been too low in the past. Leaders are now setting higher expectations, for instance of the quality and quantity of writing pupils should produce in lessons. More needs to be done to set minimum expectations of teachers, including for classroom environments. The headteacher and a group of other headteachers in Southend have conducted a review of achievement, teaching, learning and leadership. The resulting report is a useful document with appropriate next steps.

Monitoring activities are not always robust or rigorous. Lesson observations are not frequent enough and do not always provide clear enough feedback to teachers about what went well and what needs to improve. Some recommendations for improvements are not followed up quickly enough with subsequent visits to ensure matters have improved. Leaders check pupils' books. They focus on marking and presentation but do not evaluate the quality of marking. Leaders do not yet evaluate the progress pupils make by looking in their books to judge the quality of teaching over time. They do not yet check pupils' work to confirm that teachers' assessments are accurate.

Governors receive better information now and are determined to improve their own effectiveness. Their questions, though, are not always sharp enough to hold leaders to account fully. The school's improvement plan states that where teaching is less than good, support and improvement plans for teachers will be drawn up and implemented. This has not yet happened and deadlines have been missed.

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 identified that the school required improvement prior to the section 5 inspection. A local authority representative visits the school and the headteacher has the support of a school improvement partner and a local leader in education. Planned support to improve teaching in English has not yet taken place because of staff absence. Termly improvement board meetings have been planned to monitor the schools progress.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Southend-on-Sea.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Winter
Her Majesty's Inspector