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Mr John Abbott
Church Crookham Junior School
Tweseldown Road
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Dear Mr Abbott

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Church Crookham Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 5 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 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:

- ensure that lesson observations more clearly focus on the learning and progress of vulnerable groups of pupils
- ensure that written outcomes of lesson observations provide teachers with specific and detailed targets for improvement

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the deputy headteacher, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated a range of documentation including the school action plan, information relating to the monitoring of teaching, reports from the local authority representative and some governing body minutes. You took me on a tour of the school and we made brief visits to all classes where I spoke to students about their work and looked at their books.

Main findings

Senior leaders and governors were disappointed by the judgements of the inspection but you are determined and committed to driving forward improvements as quickly as possible. The action plan identifies the right priorities for improvement and includes clear targets and timelines which will enable you to measure success. A particular strength of this plan is the regular and specific programme of checking activities you have drawn up which is linked to the key areas for improvement. This will give you valuable information with which to measure the impact of the changes you have made.

The development of pupils' literacy skills is a key focus for improvement. Useful staff training has been provided by a literacy consultant from the local authority in the teaching of reading. Consequently you have improved the way reading is taught so that activities are planned to better suit the needs of all pupils. Pupils are being given more opportunities for extended writing in a range of styles across different subjects. You are raising the profile and the importance of these skills in a variety of ways, for example through engaging displays of pupils' writing around the school. As a result, pupils talk with enthusiasm and confidence about their writing. Your intended changes to the timetable of lessons later this term will mean that more learning time will be given to the development of reading and writing skills. You have established clear expectations for the presentation of pupils' work across the school. The standard of work in pupils' books indicates that teachers are applying these expectations consistently.

The changes you have made to the structure of lessons mean that teachers are planning tasks that are better suited to a range of pupils' needs and provide a more appropriate level of challenge. As a result, individuals and groups of pupils are increasingly working on a number of tasks of varying difficulty in a lesson at a pace suited to their needs.

Senior leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are sharper. You are using a variety of information including lesson observations and from pupils' books to form an accurate view of the quality of teaching. However, the written feedback of lesson observations does not always give teachers specific or detailed guidance for how

they can improve their practice. Additionally, there is too little analysis in lesson observations of the impact of teaching on the progress of vulnerable groups of pupils.

Governors are knowledgeable about the work of the school. Since the inspection the governing body has received training to improve their understanding of information about pupils' progress and governors are asking increasingly challenging questions of the school about this subject. Governors are clear about their role in checking on the progress the school is making and are reflecting on how they can make their visits to the school more effective to support this work.

External support

In recent years the local authority has provided useful support for curriculum development in English and mathematics. Since the inspection they have given valuable advice to the school in writing and refining its action plan.

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

Yours sincerely

Lisa Moore

Her Majesty's Inspector