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Amanda Dhillon
Headteacher
Sandfield Close Primary School
Sandfield Close
Leicester, LE4 7RE

Dear Mrs Dhillon

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Sandfield Close Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 10 March 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:

- make sure that the school's action plans clearly define who is monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's actions on pupils' learning
- make sure that the measures of success set out in the action plans are sharper so they can be used more precisely by leaders and governors to gauge the extent to which the teaching is improving in all classes
- focus most of the school's monitoring activities on pupils' achievement so that teachers' performance is always being judged in relation to the impact it is having on pupils' learning.

Evidence

In addition to visiting classes with senior leaders, meetings were held to discuss the actions taken since the school's inspection in December 2013. These included

meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers, the chair of the Governing body and one of the local authority's school improvement advisers. The post-Ofsted improvement plans were evaluated and Her Majesty's Inspector looked at pupil's progress and performance data.

Context

Two teachers have left the school and two have joined since the school's last inspection.

Main findings

Most of the teaching is of good or better quality and there is no inadequate teaching. Leaders rightly judge that some teaching still requires improvement and there is a good range of monitoring and support in place to improve teaching in these classes. Leaders must now focus more on how well pupils achieve in lessons, and that their judgements about the quality of teaching refer specifically to how well pupils are learning. Pupil performance data shows that improvements are already happening. Leaders and teachers are good at tracking how well pupils are doing using assessment information that is both accurate and accessible to staff and governors. Nevertheless, it is not yet clear who is monitoring the impact of the school's actions and who is evaluating how well the teaching is improving. It is also important that these monitoring activities are undertaken by different leaders and should increasingly involve governors. A review of governance has already been undertaken and governors are responding well to its recommendations. Governors recognise that they still need to gather more first-hand evidence of the impact of actions being taken to raise pupils' achievement and sustain consistent improvements to the quality of teaching.

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's school improvement adviser is providing the right balance of challenge and support. She works closely with the school's leaders to make sure that assessments and improvement planning are sharp and accurate. This is helping to focus the school's leaders, governors and staff on the most important priorities in the short and long term as the school strives towards becoming a good school.

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

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou
Her Majesty's Inspector