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Mrs Lynn Findlay
Headteacher
South Ferriby Primary School
Horkstow Road
South Ferriby
Barton-upon-Humber
Lincolnshire
DN18 6HU

Dear Mrs Findlay

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of South Ferriby Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 25 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

This visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in December 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, two members of the governing body and two representatives of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plan were evaluated. I scrutinised reports written by the School Improvement Partner, minutes of governing body meetings and reports following observations of lessons. You took me on a tour of the school so I could see pupils at work.

Context

Since the previous inspection, a teacher has reduced their hours and another teacher has been appointed so that the teaching commitment is shared. An interim Senior School Improvement Officer (SSIO) works with you for one day per week on behalf of the local authority. An additional governor has been seconded to the governing body but is yet to attend a meeting.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Leadership is being strengthened because of the regular support you receive from the SSIO. A detailed plan has been written which mirrors the local authority's plan and the areas for improvement in the section 5 report. The format for a number of documents has been changed; however, the key one for you to use when monitoring the quality of teaching is yet to be implemented. The current document places too much emphasis on the actions of teachers and does not record the learning and progress made by all pupils. Consequently, the feedback teachers receive is not clearly focused to enable them to know how to adjust their plans to ensure all pupils make the right progress. It would be helpful for you and other observers to consider how the specific areas for improvement in the inspection report are being addressed. At the moment, observations are too general. Subject coordinators for literacy and numeracy are starting to take ownership of their work. Training is planned for them as you start to distribute leadership. It is, however, too early to judge the impact of their work.

Not all governors receive reports following work that you, the SSIO and external consultants do. This situation means that it is difficult for them to challenge and ask informed questions. Governors must give time at every meeting to interrogate you and other leaders to make sure that progress toward the removal of the serious weakness designation is being made. Governors agreed that it would be helpful to send a newsletter to parents regularly so that they know what is happening in the school.

Local authority officers have provided additional support for your school since the inspection. The School Improvement Partner's visits must be specifically focused on the areas for development. Reports are also needed from external consultants so that you and the governors can check whether their work is making a difference. Consideration must be given to the number of additional governors needed.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

The school's action plan is fit for purpose

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose

Both plans meet requirements but need to be strengthened so that there is a clear distinction between those people who monitor the actions indicated and those who evaluate them. Some general milestones are indicated; additional ones to measure progress of all pupils following interventions and training are needed so that governors can check if the school is moving forward appropriately.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director for People for North Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector