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Jessica Steele
Headteacher
Horsell CofE Aided Junior School
Meadway Drive
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Dear Ms Steele

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Horsell C of E Aided Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 24 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 January 2014. 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 leaders' lesson observations more clearly evaluate the impact of teaching on the progress of pupils

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the Chair and the 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 development plan, information relating to the monitoring of teaching and information about pupils' progress. Short visits were made to several classes, where I spoke to pupils and looked at work in their books.

Main findings

Significant changes have been made to teachers' planning. Lesson plans focus on what the pupils will learn in each lesson and there is clear guidance for pupils to tell them what success will look like. Teachers in each year group continue to cover the same topics in each class, but individual teachers are planning in greater detail for the specific needs of their pupils. As a result activities are more closely matched to meet these needs. You are making careful checks of this planning and providing useful feedback and support to teachers to improve their practice.

You have established clear expectations for the feedback pupils receive. Work in pupils' books show they are frequently given detailed and specific guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils are responding frequently to these comments from their teachers by making sure they address any issues in future pieces of work. Pupils are able to talk articulately about what they are good at and what their next steps need to be. When pupils' work is incomplete, poorly presented or of poor quality they are asked to re-do it. This is raising expectations of what pupils can achieve.

You are using a variety of information including visits to lessons, talking to pupils and work in books to accurately judge the quality of teaching. However, the written outcomes of lesson observations do not include enough detail about the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.

Subject and year leaders have had valuable support to build their skills and confidence. As a result these leaders are becoming more skilled at identifying the strengths and areas for development in the parts of the school they lead and manage. A consistent approach to checking pupils' progress across subjects and year groups is not yet fully established.

A programme of useful workshops is planned for parents so that they are better able to understand the work of the school. The first of these workshops focused on the teaching of grammar and was well supported by a considerable number of parents.

A review of the governing body is set to take place early in the summer term. Changes to how the sub-committees operate are giving the governors a better overview of the work of the school. The governors have initiated a series of visits to the school to help them get a better understanding of the changes being made.

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 has provided valuable support to the school in the last three years. Since the last inspection it has given useful training and support to the leadership team in making judgements about pupils' progress based on a range of evidence. This is a key priority of the school but it is too early to see the impact of this work.

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

Yours sincerely

Lisa Moore
Her Majesty's Inspector