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Mr C Applegate
Headteacher
Kings Furlong Junior School
Upper Chestnut Drive
Basingstoke
Hampshire
RG21 8YJ

Dear Mr Applegate

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kings Furlong Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 27 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:

- use the information the school has on the attainment and progress of all groups of pupils to plan the expected gains in pupils' achievement over time and include this in the school strategic plan
- make sure the quality of pupils' learning in lessons is the key focus when judging the quality of teaching
- use a wider range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching which should include teacher's planning, lesson observations, checking on the quality of pupils' work over time, the accuracy of teachers' assessments, discussions with pupils as well as using the information you hold on pupils' attainment and progress
- Ensure that the impact of the actions within the school's plans are evaluated thoroughly to ascertain their effectiveness

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, one of the assistant headteachers, three governors, including the Chair of Governors, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also had a telephone conversation with a local authority officer. We toured the school to observe pupils' learning in lessons and I also talked to a small group of pupils. I looked at a wide range of documentation including data on pupils' attainment and progress, minutes of recent governing body meetings, the outcomes of monitoring activities and the impact of performance management. The school's strategic plan was evaluated.

Main findings

Although senior leaders and governors were disappointed at the outcome of the section 5 inspection, they quickly accepted the judgements and acted swiftly to amend plans and systems to drive school improvement.

The headteacher amended the school strategic plan to include the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. The school's strategic plan is a comprehensive document which sets out the most important areas for improvement for the school. However, due to the amount of detail in the plan, it is difficult for ascertain individuals who are responsible for monitoring some aspects of the plan or the evidence required to evaluate its effectiveness. Some parts of the plan are too task based and do not focus enough on improving specific outcomes for all groups of pupils. Although there are some milestones linked to pupils' progress, they do not sharply focus on the expected levels of attainment or the expected rates of pupils' progress for all groups of pupils in all year groups.

School leaders took swift action to ensure pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and pupils who have a parent working in the armed forces) and those vulnerable to underachievement were given additional support to increase their rates of progress. Although this additional provision has only been in place for a short time, there is clear evidence from the schools' own records, that the progress of these pupils is accelerating and the gaps in attainment are closing. Senior leaders now need to carefully monitor the progress of all groups of pupils to ensure all pupils make at least better than expected progress.

A review of the governing body was undertaken by the local authority in February 2014. Although governors questioned some of the findings in the report, they acted quickly to ensure that their challenging questions, posed at governor meetings to senior leaders, are recorded effectively and their actions are followed up more rigorously. In addition, governors have sharpened their ways of working to enable them to check on the school's progress on raising pupils' achievement, particularly in

relation to the attainment and progress of pupils in receipt of pupils premium funding. Governors are aware that they need to gather sufficient evidence in their monitoring activities in order to challenge school leaders and evaluate the school strategic plan effectively.

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

Before the inspection the local authority was providing medium level support to the school. This has continued. The local authority provides effective guidance and support to the headteacher and governors. Additional consultancy support for English and mathematics is planned to start in the summer term.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector