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31 March 2014

Mr Roger Whitewick
Headteacher
Holbrook Primary School
Holbrook Lane
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 0PS

Dear Mr Whitewick

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Holbrook Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 31 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 2104. 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:

- press forward quickly with plans to restructure the school leadership team.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you and the deputy headteacher. We to discussed the actions taken since the last inspection. I had a meeting with the Chair of the Governing Body and the governor who leads the performance and standards committee. I also held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority. I reviewed the school improvement plans and pupils' current progress in English and mathematics.

Context

Since the inspection in January 2014 two teachers have resigned. One teaching assistant has left the school. The headteacher is restructuring the senior leadership team. The school has advertised for a teacher to take on a responsibility post. There have been no applicants.

Main findings

You and your deputy headteacher have 'got to grips' with improving teaching. Teachers' expectations are now much higher than previously. Teachers' marking of pupils' work focuses strongly on what needs to improve. The effects are coming through in the school's information on pupils' better progress. For example, in mathematics. Similarly, pupils' progress in English is improving. Teachers use the information from assessments regularly to plan work that builds on pupils' understanding.

The governing body is very well informed about the work of the school. Subject leaders report to governors on the progress pupils are making in their subject. Governors value these reports, and the dialogue with staff that follows. Governors ask challenging questions. Consequently, the governing body has a clear view of what still needs to be done. The governing body has based your performance management targets on the school's improvement priorities.

You are revamping the performance management systems for teachers. Teachers' performance targets are set against the performance of different groups of pupils. Teachers are encouraged identify their training needs. The deputy headteacher has helped teachers to develop their teaching of mathematics. This includes training related to planning and subject knowledge. These actions are improving teaching.

The school improvement plan focuses on the right things to improve teaching. Governors monitor the school's work regularly to assess what progress is being made to improve performance.

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 supported the school well in putting together the improvement action plan. The representative of the local authority has carried out a review of teaching. These observations confirm that teachers have acted on the advice given to improve teaching. For example, teachers are providing more precise explanations to pupils about their performance. The feedback to teachers, following

this review, has been well received. There is a real team commitment to improvement, which is commendable.

The local authority is fully aware of the need to consolidate school leadership responsibilities. It is important that senior leaders work with the local authority to find a solution.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech
Her Majesty's Inspector