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Mr Mark Wrigley
Headteacher
Stanford Junior and Infant School
Cooper Lane
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Lincolnshire
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Dear Mr Wrigley

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Stanford Junior and Infant School, North East Lincolnshire

Following my visit to your school on 28 April 2014 with Anne Bowyer HMI, 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. The school should take immediate action to:

- Sharpen senior leaders monitoring of the quality of pupils' work to make sure pupils' progress is rapid within lessons and over time.
- Make sure teachers start pupils off on tasks pitched at the right level of challenge so that no time is wasted.
- Check that the most able pupils in Key Stage 1 are reading from books that are sufficiently challenging for them.

Evidence

During the visit, we met with you, other senior leaders, pupils, members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action

taken since the last monitoring inspection. During this visit, the main focus was evaluating pupils' progress in mathematics and the quality of pupils' reading in Key Stage 1. We visited lessons, looked at the school's internal data and scrutinised pupils' work in their books. We also heard pupils read and looked at records of staff absence.

Main findings

Since the last inspection you, senior leaders and governors have increased the checks they do on the quality of teaching and pupils' work. These are sensible steps and there has been some improvement but it is not rapid enough to secure good progress for pupils across the school. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have sustained their visits to lessons and checks on the work in pupils' books. However, their checks remain focussed on whether teachers stick to the marking policy rather than how well the work set by teachers is helping pupils to make progress. Consequently, they have an over-optimistic view of how well pupils are doing and the quality of teaching in the school.

Work in pupils' books show that teachers still do not always give pupils the right level of challenge and there are too many occasions when activities are not adjusted to match pupils' abilities. This results in the most able pupils sailing through the work with ease and little in the way of challenge. In the meanwhile, less able pupils struggle to complete the same task and resort to relying on adult help.

Pupils' presentation in their books has improved but remains less than pristine because teachers are not insistent on what they will and will not accept. The result is that pupils do not take a pride in their work and this leads to work that is not precise, especially in mathematics.

In Key Stage 1, pupils' reading is not developing quickly enough. The most able pupils have books that are too easy for them. Where pupils are finding reading difficult, teachers are not giving enough guidance to parents about how they can help at home.

Governors have increased their visits to the school and improving how they offer challenge. However, this is not bringing about improvements quickly enough and there is still a great deal of work to do before pupils' progress is routinely good. Governors keep themselves up to date with how well pupils are doing but sometimes the information is not clear enough for these checks to be incisive.

Leaders are keen to bring about improvements and there are clear examples of their success. For example, a robust approach to dealing with staff absence has brought about a marked reduction in the number of times pupils are taught by supply staff. Pupils say they have noticed lessons are more purposeful and they appreciate the time and trouble teachers go to give them extra help.

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 support from the local authority has been mainly in the form of contributing to a recent review of the school. However, the support to the school to develop the skills of leaders has not been effective and has failed to bring about rapid improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Joan Hewitt

Her Majesty's Inspector