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Helen Bartlett
Headteacher
Queen's Dyke CP School
Burwell Drive
Witney
OX28 5JW

Dear Mrs Bartlett

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Queen's Dyke CP School

Following my visit to your school on 12 May 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 third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other leaders, a group of pupils, a local leader of education who is supporting the school and a representative of the local authority. I conducted a telephone conversation with one governor. I scrutinised a range of the school's documentation and made short visits to seven lessons.

Context

Five teachers have left the school and three have joined since the last monitoring inspection in October 2013. One new teaching assistant has started. An existing member of staff became the acting deputy headteacher in November 2013. A substantive deputy headteacher has been recruited and will start in September 2014. One governor has left and three have joined.

Main findings

Inadequate teaching has been eradicated and the proportion of good teaching is growing rapidly. This is because senior leaders have rightly focused tightly and relentlessly on improving teaching. In addition to weekly training for all teachers, they have provided intensive support for those who have needed it most. Senior leaders have challenged poor performance robustly and shared the best practice effectively. Crucially, they have established non-negotiable expectations which all teachers have to meet, leading to individual improvement plans which clearly define how teaching needs to improve and at what rate. Senior leaders' regular and accurate checks on teachers' performance have made sure that the rate of improvement in the quality of teaching has been swift.

Pupils' achievement is improving as a result of better teaching. Increasingly, pupils are making good progress and standards are rising, including in Key Stage 1. Pupils' achievement is strongest in reading and writing, although their progress in mathematics is accelerating. The gaps in achievement between those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils are closing. However, although the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is improving, it varies too much between different year groups.

Other leaders have begun to have more impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. For example, they check the accuracy of teachers' assessments, observe teaching and give teachers helpful advice about how they could improve. Governors now use data to challenge leaders more effectively. They have a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Governors have a clear role in evaluating the progress of the school, including visiting the school to gather their own evidence of improvements.

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 headteacher has made good use of the support provided by the local authority. For example, provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved. Also, the leadership of mathematics and English is now more effective. The local authority regularly monitors and evaluates the progress of the school, challenging and supporting school leaders appropriately. The local authority's support for the school is decreasing, however, because senior leaders have successfully demonstrated the capacity to make further improvements.

The school has continued to benefit from strong links with Wood Farm Primary School, a local good school. The headteacher, a local leader of education, has

provided valuable advice for senior leaders. Teachers and leaders from both schools work productively together to share ideas and approaches.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Haynes
Her Majesty's Inspector