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21 May 2014

Mrs Jo Collard
Headteacher
Clockhouse Primary School
Clockhouse Lane
Romford
RM5 3QR

Dear Mrs Collard

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Clockhouse Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 21 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in February 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.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the acting deputy headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, a parent governor, a representative of the local authority and a group of middle leaders to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. I also conducted a tour of the school with senior leaders.

Context

Since the inspection there have been a number of staff changes. You have been appointed as the substantive headteacher. Governors have also appointed a deputy

headteacher and an assistant headteacher to join the school in September 2014. In addition, two members of staff have been promoted to assistant headteacher.

Four teachers have left the school. These teachers have been replaced by two permanent appointments and a long-term supply teacher.

Main findings

The post-Ofsted action plan is clearly focused on the areas of improvement identified at the last inspection. The plan sets out ambitious targets for the school and detailed actions are in place. Expected outcomes are clear and are set in appropriate timescales. Monitoring shows that improvements are being made in line with these and that their impact is regularly monitored. While monitoring and evaluations are in place within the structure of the plan, it is not always clear how all leaders contribute to the evaluative process.

The planned improvements outlined within the action plan are very ambitious. The pace of improvement will need to be both rapid and sustained if these are to be met.

The school has reviewed its process for collecting data on student progress. The frequency of data collection has increased, and the use of data to target underachievement and to plan for learning is robust. Data is moderated both internally and externally. The new procedures have highlighted strengths in practice, but have also made clear the learning gaps in Year 2 and Year 6. Carefully targeted interventions are beginning to impact on pupils' progress, particularly in literacy, but you acknowledge that more needs to be done.

You have articulated clear expectations for marking and feedback. These are being rigorously monitored and as a result, there is an improvement in the quality of marking and pupils' response to this. Although this is not yet consistent across all books, there is a noticeable improvement in marking since the previous inspection. Pupils are now responding to feedback and improving their work as a result. They now use this process to ask for help or to question the teacher. However, teachers do not always respond to these questions and comments. There are clear links between teachers marking and assessment, and pupils' targets. Pupils can now articulate the next step to improve their work and explain what their target means to them.

You and other leaders are ensuring that teachers are improving their teaching practice. Middle leaders have received additional training to ensure that they can support both the monitoring of learning and the development of teaching. Leaders at all levels now regularly observe in lessons, undertake work scrutiny, and review progress data and teachers' planning. The outcomes from these actions are now brought together to improve understanding of the quality of teaching overtime.

Leaders then target individual support for teachers to their needs; as a result the quality of teaching and learning is improving.

Senior leaders' view of teaching is matched by internal assessment data. This shows rates of progress are improving across the school. This improvement is not yet consistent across all year groups.

Governors are clear which areas of the school need to improve and had begun to address these before the inspection. They are now in the process of reviewing the role and structure of governance at the school. Governors are now linked to key leaders and managers and are receiving training to support a greater level of challenge and accountability.

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 is providing additional support to the school and to you as the headteacher. Additional support has been provided for the development of the curriculum, middle leaders and tracking pupil progress.

The local authority review the progress the school is making every six weeks; a collaborative partnership with a local school is currently being finalised. This has been brokered by the local authority.

You have also engaged an education consultant to provide additional capacity to the leadership team.

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

Yours sincerely

Kevin Flanagan
Her Majesty's Inspector