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Mrs F Morgan
Headteacher
Hamsey Green Primary
Tithepit Shaw Lane
Warlingham
CR6 9AP

Dear Mrs Morgan

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hamsey Green Primary

Following my visit to your school on 16 July 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 May 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. The school should take further action to:

- sharpen the links in the action plan between planned actions and their impact on pupils' progress so it is easy to check they are working
- ensure all leaders rigorously check that teachers are doing what they should be in line with the action plan and school policies
- raise staff expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially the most able.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, members of your senior leadership team and governors to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also

talked to a representative from the local authority. You accompanied me on visits to lessons and I looked at some examples of pupils' books. I scrutinised documentation and evaluated the school development plan.

Main findings

With your staff and governors, you have drafted a detailed school improvement plan, which rightly focuses on tackling the identified weaknesses in pupils' behaviour and achievement. Your plan is clear for governors and staff to understand, but does not make enough links between what you are planning to do and how pupils will learn more as a result of the improvements. You also need to make it clear when the actions should be completed and who is responsible.

You have introduced 'learning behaviours' across the school to tackle concerns about behaviour in lessons and pupils not challenging themselves to learn more. This new approach, where more is expected of the pupils, was demonstrated well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Here the children showed resilience and independence to build a raft, using their own strategies to achieve success, such as asking a friend to help. Feedback from Year 4 and 5 pupils shows they understand how different ways of behaving help them learn and that they think the new approach is helping them to make more progress. However, as we saw, teachers have variable expectations of behaviour in lessons. Where the standards are not high enough, learning time is lost.

You have implemented new teaching approaches to mathematics, which help teachers to identify gaps in pupils' learning and focus the teaching on those specific areas. Although attainment in mathematics continues to be a concern in all year groups, it is good to see that you have put in place additional teaching support to accelerate learning for pupils who have fallen behind.

The positive changes in science, such as reorganising the timetable so that science has a greater priority and changing the way pupils record their work, are helping them make more progress. Pupils are writing more in science and their work is of a higher standard. Teachers and pupils now recognise that science work should reflect the same standards as other subjects and there is evidence that this is happening in some classes. In Year 4, where the pupils were investigating the preferred environments of woodlice, I saw detailed recording of results and explanations.

Middle leaders are more effective in improving their areas of responsibility. An example of this is introducing a new approach to teaching letters and sounds (phonics) in Key Stage 1. Pupils are now taught in smaller groups based on their ability, resulting in a significant increase in the number of pupils who met national expectations in the Year 1 phonics check this year.

School leaders' checks on pupils' achievement and teachers' work are still not sufficiently frequent or rigorous. This means that, where teachers' practice and pupils' work does not reflect school policy, action is not taken quickly enough to make sure everyone is doing what they should be. However, you have now restructured the leadership team so that phase leaders are responsible for checking teaching and learning in their teams, and therefore more accountable for the progress made.

You have reorganised how you present information about pupils' progress over time. The new format helps leaders and governors to understand who has not made enough progress. You have rightly made teachers responsible for presenting their pupils' progress at the termly meetings, but the focus is only on pupils who have not made expected progress. This means that teachers are not yet expecting enough of the most able pupils, or expecting highly of all.

The governing body is restructuring to make sure that the skills of individuals are relevant to their specific roles. Now that the amalgamation of the two schools is consolidated all leaders, including governors, need to refocus their time and efforts to become more ambitious for what the school and pupils can achieve.

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 effective support to help the school to address the areas for improvement. Advisors have supported senior and middle leaders with drafting the school development plan, understanding and presenting information on pupils' progress, evaluating lessons and reviewing work in pupils' books. It would be helpful for the local authority to broker support with an outstanding school, so that teachers, leaders and governors recognise outstanding practice.

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

Yours sincerely

Louise Adams

Seconded Inspector