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9 September 2014

Mr M Sammes
Headteacher
Manor Junior School
Fernhill Road
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Farnborough
GU14 9DX

Dear Mr Sammes

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Manor Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 9 September 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 June 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:

- make sure all teachers follow the school policies on marking and feedback, presentation and behaviour
- hold phase leaders to account for the performance of their teams
- make sure governors use pupil performance data to check the progress of pupils.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the deputy headteacher, governors, middle leaders and a representative from the local authority, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also visited classrooms with you, scrutinised work in pupils' books and evaluated the school improvement plan.

Main findings

Since the section 5 inspection in June, you and your deputy headteacher have tackled the areas for improvement with determination and focus. The school improvement plan is detailed and relevant. It lists the necessary actions to improve the school and it is clear what impact these actions will have.

You have sensibly restructured the leadership responsibilities so that newly appointed phase leaders are now accountable for the learning of pupils in their phases. The local authority leadership learning partner is working with them to develop the skills required for the role. However, it is not clear enough in the school improvement plan how the work of phase leaders will be monitored.

Your reorganisation of planning, preparation and assessment time, giving teachers time each day to evaluate what pupils have learned, has the potential to ensure their teaching relates more closely to the needs of the pupils. You are well aware of the need to monitor the benefits of this closely. Your restructuring of class timetables to provide time for pupils to deepen their learning and understand more fully what has been taught, is also a positive move.

During the monitoring inspection, pupils were seen to be purposeful and interested in learning. In some classes they produced work of a good standard and took care with their presentation. This was demonstrated in a Year 6 class, where the teacher enabled pupils to identify for themselves the differences between an autobiography and a biography. However, in some of the classrooms we visited, the learning objectives (the purpose of the learning) were not clear or relevant and some teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour, presentation and work were not high enough.

The marking and feedback policy has been reviewed. Teachers are now marking more frequently and in greater detail. You are checking this carefully to make sure the comments are helping pupils to learn more and know what they need to do next. You have rightly identified that the quality of teachers' marking is not yet consistently high. You and other leaders have recognised the need for further training.

The deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs co-ordinator, has rigorously reviewed the support provided for individual pupils. She has reorganised the learning support assistants to improve the help provided for pupils. She is accurately tracking the progress of groups of pupils and checking that the support is helping them to learn at a faster pace, but it is too soon to see the impact of this.

The governors have commissioned an external review and now recognise they need to acquire more knowledge and expertise to be able to hold you to account. They do

not yet have the skills and knowledge required to carry out their role but the review will help them to consider how best to achieve this.

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 engaged quickly and purposefully with the school. In the short time since the previous inspection, the leadership learning partner has met with headteacher, leaders and teachers to provide relevant support and training at all levels. The planned programme of advisory support for the school is appropriate.

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

Yours sincerely

Louise Adams

Seconded Inspector