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Mrs Kate Clifford
Southwold Primary School and Early Years' Centre
Kennington Road
Radford
Nottingham
NG8 1QD

Dear Mrs Clifford

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Southwold Primary School and Early Years' Centre

Following my visit to your school on 22 September 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that the school's website contains the required and relevant information to meet statutory requirements.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the action taken since the last monitoring inspection. I evaluated your plans for improvement. I reviewed your most recent data relating to pupils' achievement. I visited each class and considered the quality of pupils' learning in a range of subjects. I looked at the school's documentation relating to the safeguarding and attendance of pupils. I looked at the information which the school provides for parents and carers, including that held on its website.

Context

Since the first monitoring inspection, two teachers have left the school at the end of the summer term 2014. The governing body has appointed two newly-qualified teachers to teach pupils in Year 4 and Year 5. An experienced teacher has been appointed to teach pupils in Year 3. The three teachers commenced their positions in September 2014. One new member of the governing body has been appointed.

Main findings

You have kept a closer eye on pupils' progress by introducing half-termly assessments. This has led to more robust discussions with teachers about each pupil and how well they are doing. Consequently, pupils' next learning steps are identified for the following half term; pupils who are falling behind are provided with a support programme to help them catch up. Pupils who are doing well are set more challenging targets.

Your visits to lessons are showing that teachers are using this information to set work which is, mostly, set at the right level of difficulty for pupils. Teachers are checking more closely during lessons how well pupils are doing. This is because teachers are asking more precise questions to check on pupils' understanding as well as to challenge their thinking. This is helping to move learning forward more quickly during lessons and inform the planning of subsequent ones. The combination of these approaches has resulted to improvements in the quality of teaching. This has led to pupils making faster progress in each year group in reading, writing and mathematics.

Governors' appointment of an attendance officer has helped to raise parents' awareness of the importance of their children attending regularly and being on time for school. More rigorous systems for following up pupils' absence, checking lateness and reasons for taking children home before the end of the school day, are working well. As a result, pupils' attendance rates have increased; and the number of pupils being late for school has reduced.

Your school improvement plan more sharply focuses upon the key areas for improvement. The introduction of clearer measures of success is helping governors to hold senior leaders to greater account for the pace of improvement.

You have continued to increase the amount of information given to parents and carers. This is helping them to support their child's learning at home more effectively. However, information on the school's website in relation to, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and the school's use of the primary sport funding, is not up to date. Consequently, this does not meet statutory requirements.

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 provided effective support to the school. The school has received helpful advice relating to the recruitment of new staff as well as in drawing up clear plans to support their induction. Teachers new to the school have settled quickly because they are clear about the jobs they have been asked to do.

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

Yours sincerely

David Carter
Her Majesty's Inspector