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24 September 2014

Jeremy Fisher
Headteacher
Brimsdown Primary School
Green Street
Enfield
EN3 7NA

Dear Mr Fisher

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Brimsdown Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 23 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 May 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection and plans are not sharply focused on rapidly bringing about improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- ensure the main improvement activities set out clear timescales and measures of impact to assess the progress made
- develop focused monitoring and evaluation procedures by which governors can review, challenge and support work on the areas requiring improvement
- incorporate into the school action plan recommendations from the external review of the school's use pupil premium funding.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the Chair of the Governing Body, two other governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated together with school data on the outcomes from the most recent assessments in 2014 across the school.

Context

Since the last inspection four teachers have left the school. In September four teachers joined the staff, three of them newly qualified.

Main findings

Overall the school has made insufficient progress in important areas over time. Generally, the issues that need to be improved remain largely the same as outlined in the letter published in November 2012 after the last monitoring visit following the full inspection in September of that year. That inspection also judged the school to require improvement. Most important, the quality of teaching remains inconsistent which leads to underachievement by groups of pupils. This is seen, for example, in the most recent outcomes for Year 6 pupils that the school itself note are disappointing in reading and mathematics.

The school action plan covers all the recommendations from the last inspection. Senior leaders have responsibility for particular activities and there are general timescales. But, despite covering a range of activities, the plan does not focus sufficiently on specific timescales together with measures to assess the impact of improvements on the outcomes for pupils. Overall, the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations from the inspection needs to be assessed and measured more robustly.

Members of the governing body receive a wide range of information, including data on pupils' progress, at full governing body and committee levels. There is evidence that they hold senior leaders to account for the overall development of the school in meeting the needs of the community. However, there is less evidence of focused monitoring and evaluation of action plan objectives against clear, measureable outcomes for pupils. This means that although governors have a broad understanding of how the school is improving, they have insufficient precise information to hold the school to account with rigour.

The external review of the school's use of the pupil premium is planned for early October. The outcomes of this review need to be incorporated into the school's

action plan and become a robust part of the monitoring and evaluation process based on the outcomes for this vulnerable group of pupils.

There are positive aspects of school improvement being developed. It is clear that you, senior leaders and governors are committed to improving overall outcomes for pupils. Procedures for monitoring pupils' achievement are being further refined and there are regular progress meetings between individual teachers and senior leaders. There is now a stronger focus on improving marking and involving pupils in this process. The school's behaviour policy has been reviewed so that pupils are encouraged to develop positive attitudes in lessons.

I will conduct a further monitoring inspection during the spring term 2015 to evaluate the progress made by the school.

External support

The local authority has supported and challenged the school through a variety of activities both before and since the last inspection. These have included specific support for mathematics and coaching for teachers as part of a programme of individual support. The local authority has also brokered links with a local primary school whose headteacher is a National Leader in Education. However, despite a range of support the local authority was unable to prevent the school from being judged as requiring improvement for the second time within the last two years.

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

Yours sincerely

Robert Pyner
Her Majesty's Inspector