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26 September 2014

Stephen O'Brien
Head of School
Hoxton Garden Primary School
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Dear Mr O'Brien

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hoxton Garden Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 25 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 December 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 improvement plans identify clearly who will evaluate the impact of actions, and how and when they will do so.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the Executive Headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school development plan was evaluated. Other documents scrutinised included information about pupils' achievement in 2014, minutes of governing body meetings, and notes

made following visits from the local authority adviser. Together, we made short visits to most classes. We also looked at work in some pupils' books.

Context

At the time of the previous inspection, the school was in a federation with four other local primary schools. Following the inspection, the local authority arranged for the de-federation of these schools and made arrangements for this school to be supported through partnership with two other local primary schools. The Executive Headteacher has been responsible for the school since 1 April 2014 when these arrangements were implemented.

Since taking up these responsibilities, the Executive Headteacher has appointed you as head of school. Together you have restructured the leadership team, appointing two deputy headteachers and a special educational needs coordinator. Many teachers have left the school, and ten new teachers joined in September 2014. Five of these are newly-qualified. A learning mentor has also been appointed.

A wide-ranging consultation involving parents, staff, pupils and governors resulted in the school changing its name from Burbage School to Hoxton Garden Primary School on 1 September 2014. Alongside this change of name, the school has introduced a new uniform and logo.

Main findings

When he took on responsibility for the school, the Executive Headteacher drew up comprehensive plans to ensure the school's rapid development. Actions planned to address the areas of concern highlighted in the inspection report are threaded through these documents, but are not clearly identified as discrete areas of priority. The plans detail what will be done, by whom and when in a realistic timeframe. Plans provide broad information about how improvements will be checked and evaluated. They do not, however, identify which senior leaders or governors will be involved in this activity. Providing this structure would enable governors to be more effective in their work when checking that the school is on track to achieve its goals.

You have set up an inclusion team led by one of the deputy headteachers, supported by the special educational needs coordinator and learning mentor. They have identified the provision required for individual pupils and put this in place. They have introduced a rigorous system for checking progress regularly and ensuring that their actions have an impact on pupil outcomes.

You have reorganised the way that teaching takes place to ensure that teachers can be held accountable for the progress of the pupils in their class. Planning for each lesson is expected to show how the most able will be challenged and how the least able will be supported. You have introduced robust systems to monitor the quality of

teaching over time, using a wide range of activities in order to ensure that judgments are secure.

Middle leaders are being well-supported as they develop their roles. They are now involved in checking teachers' planning, scrutiny of books and delivery of staff training relating to their area of responsibility. They have taken on these additional responsibilities with relish and say they are excited about the school's future.

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 acted swiftly to intervene following the inspection in December 2013 and brokered partnership arrangements with Orchard and Southwold Primary Schools. During the spring term the school improvement adviser worked regularly in the school providing effective support to leaders. During these weekly visits she worked alongside teachers and leaders to ensure that information about pupils' achievement was increasingly reliable. She also ensured that other advisers offered support as appropriate for example, to develop the quality of teaching in mathematics. The local authority will continue to monitor and support the school under its new leadership arrangements.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Hackney and Hackney Learning Trust.

Yours sincerely

Gaynor Roberts
Her Majesty's Inspector