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17 September 2014

Mr Neil Woollcott
Headteacher
The Leverton Junior School
Honey Lane
Waltham Abbey
EN9 3BE

Dear Mr Woollcott

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Leverton Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 16 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 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:

- strengthen further the teaching of mathematics
- ensure that pupils improve the accuracy of their spelling, and their command of punctuation and grammar
- provide all governors with the training they need to enable them to challenge the school's leaders effectively

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders and two members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I made brief visits to a number of lessons and looked at the way teachers give pupils feedback about their work. I evaluated the school's improvement plans and documents relating to the outcomes of monitoring activities and the impact of performance management.

Context

Since the previous inspection, new teachers have joined the school and there have been changes to leaders' roles and responsibilities.

Main findings

You have a clear understanding of what needs to happen in order for standards to rise, and, together with other leaders and teachers, you are working with determination to drive further improvement. Regular checks on the quality of the teaching and feedback pupils receive provide an accurate understanding of where teaching is most effective, and what needs to improve. You have ensured pupils are set more ambitious targets, and the most effective teachers are starting to help their colleagues to plan activities that will enable all pupils to take the next steps in their learning. Sometimes, however, the progress of more-able pupils slows, because they do not move on to more demanding tasks quickly enough. Most teachers give regular, and specific, feedback to pupils, who usually respond and improve their work. Some do not and continue to make the same mistakes.

The recently-appointed subject leader for mathematics has made a number of changes that are starting to improve the quality of teaching, and the frequency with which pupils apply the mathematical techniques they have learned to problem-solving activities.

The school's monitoring data indicates that additional support given to less confident younger readers has been effective. The literacy subject leader's careful monitoring means pupils who need it receive extra help to improve. More-able pupils are completing work that is appropriately demanding. The impact of more recent changes on improving the accuracy of pupils' use of spelling, punctuation and grammar is less evident. Many older pupils continue to spell everyday words incorrectly.

Governors have used pupil premium funding to provide additional teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Monitoring indicates their progress is accelerating. Changes recommended by the recent review of governance mean that pupils' progress is tracked more closely and regularly. Some governors have strengthened their capacity to challenge leaders by engaging in additional training; others have yet to do so.

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

Local authority representatives continue to provide robust reviews of the extent of the progress towards improvement plan objectives, via the Improvement Board. The

local authority has secured the assistance of a headteacher, and Local Leader of Education, who is beginning to provide you with useful support.



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

Yours sincerely

Jason Howard
Her Majesty's Inspector