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Julie Taylor
Headteacher
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Dormers Wells Lane
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Dear Mrs Taylor

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Dormers Wells Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 16 December 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 September 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:

- sharpen the school's improvement plan so that is clear who is leading actions and who is responsible for checking the progress being made
- develop middle leaders' skills further so that they can better hold teachers to account.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, pupils, two members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan, single central record, the review of governance and records of

the governing body were reviewed. Pupils' books and the school's own records of checks on teaching and achievement were scrutinised.

Context

Since the last inspection one teacher has been on long-term sick leave and has resigned with effect from the end of the current term. A long-term supply teacher is covering this vacancy until Christmas. Two senior teachers now share the responsibility for the subject leadership of English, with one leading on writing and the other on reading.

Main findings

The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, is taking appropriate action to address the issues identified at the previous inspection. Leaders have created an improvement plan which sets out clearly stated actions, which link to the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection. However, the plan does not clearly show the individuals who are responsible for leading change or who will be monitoring progress over time. The plan provides clear success criteria for what leaders want the school to achieve by the next inspection.

The headteacher has introduced more regular checks on pupils' work. These focus on pupils' progress and compliment information gathered from classroom observations and book checks. This information is being used to hold staff to account more robustly. Senior leaders demonstrate clear resolve to ensure all pupils are making good progress, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. The checks made on different groups are helping teachers to adapt their teaching and support to meet the needs of these pupils better. The review of pupil premium funding is booked for next term with a local teaching school. There is increasing consistency in the application of agreed policies. For example, most teachers are giving clear feedback which helps pupils to make the necessary improvements to their work.

The school's records of the monitoring of teaching show that the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. An increasing proportion of pupil work shows good progress. However there is still too much teaching which requires improvement over time. Leaders acknowledge that a small amount of teaching is inadequate, where there is insufficient challenge for pupils, particularly the more able. Leaders are taking decisive action to tackle this.

In the past, middle leaders were given insufficient time to make checks on their areas of responsibility or to make improvements. The headteacher has ensured middle leaders are now given time to fulfil their responsibilities. They show enthusiasm for their new and developing roles. They have a clear understanding of the schools' strengths and weaknesses. They are taking greater responsibility for making checks on other staff through formal reviews of planning, looking at pupils'

books and evaluating pupils' learning over time. Further training is needed to help middle leaders hold staff more firmly to account when they do not put the agreed actions into place.

Governors have used the review of governance and increased challenge from the local authority to improve their effectiveness. They now have a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve. They ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met. Governors believe that they are now better placed to support and challenge school leaders. They recognise the need for improvement in teaching and have a better understanding of the school's work through their more regular meetings with staff. They have taken action to enhance the skills of the governing body. For example, they have co-opted two additional governors.

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 is providing a good level of challenge and support, closely matched to the school's needs. This is ensuring leaders are focused on the impact of actions on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. A link improvement officer visits the school regularly to check on progress and ensure leaders are driving changes quickly. The officer is also helping governors develop their ability to hold the school's leadership team to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. The school is accessing a number of training opportunities for staff. For example, subject consultants are supporting middle leaders to improve the curriculum. The local authority is brokering the support of an outstanding school to further develop the skills of middle leaders.

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

Yours sincerely

David Storrie
Her Majesty's Inspector