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Ms Anne Phillips
Headteacher
Kington Primary School
Mill Street
Kington
HR5 3AL

Dear Mrs Phillips

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kington Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 19 January 2015, 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 July 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 ensure:

- there is individual accountability for senior leaders identified through specific and dated targets in the relevant action plans
- governors are fully trained and aware of the latest data on achievement of pupils in order that they can challenge the school more effectively on its performance.

Evidence

During the inspection meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, a group of pupils, six members of the Governing Body, including the Chair, and a local headteacher representing of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. A telephone conversation was also held with the local authority's newly appointed link officer. The school's action plan was evaluated. Other

documents were scrutinised including the latest achievement data analysis, a report on the review of governance and other specific action plans for literacy, numeracy and the pupil premium.

Context

Since the last inspection the deputy headteacher was acting headteacher for part of the Autumn term during the headteacher's illness.

Main findings

You and your senior leaders have responded with urgency and rigour to address issues arising from the last inspection. There is now an increased level of challenge for teachers. Leaders have a realistic view of the school now following the inspection.

Leaders have quickly identified where teaching is not so strong, particularly in some Key Stage 2 classes and have put in place measures to bring about rapid improvements. This has included more focussed monitoring internally; not just lesson observations but also through pupil work scrutiny and analysis of pupil progress. Senior leaders have been linked with identified teachers to provide coaching and mentoring and to model good lessons.

Increased monitoring is ensuring lessons are planned to in accordance with pupils' different starting points including the most able pupils. Recent checks by the school indicate there has been a marked difference in the quality of teaching and teachers' use of questioning as a result.

All pupils spoken to in Key Stage 2 reported lessons were better and that they were learning more in an environment more conducive to learning. They were particularly enthused in literacy through opportunities to practice their creative writing. They are developing their writing in mathematics and science as well but were less impressed by the worksheets they have to complete in religious education.

All senior leaders are involved in observing teaching and tracking progress of pupils through the newly introduced tracking system. They have an accurate view of where teaching is strongest and where support has been needed. They are checking data termly to track whether all pupils are on course to make at least expected progress.

Regular pupil progress meetings between you and teachers are holding them to account analysing data. There is a collegiate approach to joint responsibility on the senior leadership team. Similar performance targets for the joint coordinators of literacy and numeracy makes it harder to hold individual leaders to account in their areas of responsibility in the same way as teachers however.

Action plans have been based around the key areas for development following the last inspection. Although some targets are very specific others are more general and

not dated. There is not individual responsibility for monitoring and evaluation as it is conducted by senior leaders collectively

Governors responded quickly after the last inspection by making arrangements for a review held in September 2014. The changes introduced are leading to a smaller governing body and more efficient use of their time. Newly appointed governors have received very thorough induction training and have brought increased educational experience and knowledge to the governing body. Governors are aware of strengths and areas for development in teaching.

Governors have ensured there is additional capacity on the senior leadership team by agreeing to increase the deputy headteacher's management time. They were not fully aware of the most recent achievement outcomes for 2014 in the unvalidated RAISEonline published in December 2014 however. Not all individual leaders are being held to account yet by the 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 has been very proactive in arranging additional support and challenge for the school. It has funded the time provided by the headteacher from a local federation of schools to improve teaching, the monitoring of teaching and pupil progress and to focus on pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The local authority quickly held a review of governance at the beginning of the Autumn term and their recommendations are now being implemented.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims
Her Majesty's Inspector