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Mrs Valerie Rose
Interim headteacher
Langford Primary School
Gilstead Road
London
SW6 2LG

Dear Mrs Rose

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Langford Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 10 February, 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 June 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and the interim executive board are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- secure greater stability in the staffing structure to allow consistency of practice and enable improvements to become embedded
- improve the teaching of mathematics, so that pupils are able to use and apply their knowledge effectively
- ensure pupils are sufficiently challenged to enable them to make more rapid progress.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, senior and middle leaders, pupils from Key Stage 2, two representatives from the interim executive board and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection.

I examined school improvement documents, records of the monitoring of teaching safeguarding records and interim executive board minutes. I looked at pupils' current achievement data as well as published information. You accompanied me during visits to all classes in the school, where we observed teaching and looked at pupils' work.

Context

Since the inspection in June, you have been appointed as the interim headteacher. There are newly appointed teachers in all classes. Most teachers have been in post since September, but some joined in January 2015. Additional senior leaders have been appointed, including a deputy headteacher who joined in November and an assistant headteacher who joined in January. All of these posts have temporary contracts. A formal consultation for the school to become an academy has taken place, with United Learning selected as the sponsor.

Main findings

You have a very clear and detailed improvement plan, which is evaluated regularly to ensure actions are on track to secure rapid improvement. This, along with your resolute determination, has led to substantial improvements being made in a short amount of time. You are well supported by the newly appointed senior leaders and the interim executive board. They monitor the action plan and evaluate its impact on a weekly basis and ensure areas for improvement are addressed quickly. Newly appointed middle leaders are being given professional development opportunities to enable them to carry out their role more effectively.

There have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching. Although teachers are all recently appointed to the school, there are clear expectations in place for what constitutes best practice. Frequent monitoring of teachers' performance and pupils' outcomes takes place. Teachers appreciate the regular feedback which is improving their practice. Teachers' expectations of pupils are increasing. Assessment data is analysed regularly and effectively and pupils who are not making enough progress are provided with extra support. According to the school's tracking data, most pupils are making more rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, discussions with pupils, alongside scrutiny of their books, reveal that their work does not always challenge them sufficiently. Leaders are aware of this and are taking action to ensure work stretches all pupils.

There are more opportunities for professional development. Teachers and teaching assistants have been well supported by professionals from outstanding schools. This has had a particularly positive impact on the quality of phonics teaching, where pupils learn about the sounds that letters make. As there has been a considerable turnover of staff, this training needs to be ongoing. Some teachers have also received training in mathematics, which has refined their subject knowledge and

practice. Further training is needed, as well as additional mathematical resources, to ensure that good practice is consistent and to enable all pupils' to make better progress.

A range of smaller group sessions take place throughout the school to meet specific pupils' needs. Evaluation of the school's tracking information shows that these are having a significant impact on pupils' progress. Year 6 pupils work in three smaller groups in the mornings. Their work is set at an appropriate level, enabling them to make better progress. Leaders are taking action to ensure that all teaching assistants are able to support pupils effectively.

Teachers' feedback provides clear targets to help pupils improve their work. Pupils are responding more regularly to the marking and good progress can be seen in most pupils' books. This practice now needs to be applied consistently. Pupils' handwriting is starting to improve through the implementation of a new handwriting scheme. This now needs applying consistently in all lessons. Teachers also need to ensure they are picking up on basic errors more regularly, so that pupils are not embedding poor practice of basic skills.

Highly skilled and extremely determined members of the interim executive board challenge the school rigorously and effectively. Senior leaders are particularly well supported by two members with educational backgrounds, who are relentless in their ambition to ensure improvements are secured as rapidly as possible. Members of the interim executive board visit the school regularly, undertaking a variety of monitoring activities and checking on the impact of actions implemented from the improvement plan. They provide robust challenge as well as effective support. Board members acknowledge that this is not reflected in the minutes of their meetings.

External support

The local authority has increased its support recently. Advisors now visit the school on a regular basis to review the quality of teaching and learning. Support has been given to Early Years Foundation Stage practitioners, the leader for special educational needs and senior leaders. Advisors have also worked with the school to improve mathematics provision and the teaching of pupils with English as an additional language. Leaders acknowledge that this has supported the improvement in the quality of teaching.

The school has been linked with two neighbouring outstanding schools. Teachers have visited the schools to observe outstanding practice. This has improved the quality of teaching throughout the school, particularly the practice of newly qualified teachers. The local authority recognises the interim headteacher's significant contribution to the school's recent improvements.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Mel Rose
Her Majesty's Inspector