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Rosalind Brotherton
Headteacher
Flyford Flavell First School
Radford Road
Flyford Flavell
Worcester
WR7 4BS

Dear Mrs Brotherton

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Flyford Flavell First School

Following my visit to your school on 5 March, 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 month and year. 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.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, 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. A short visit was made to each classroom to look at the work in pupils' books and talk to pupils about their learning, as well as informal conversations with members of staff. Other documents viewed included, minutes of governing body meetings, the summary of external reviews and outcomes of monitoring activities.

Main findings

You have identified the immediate priorities and have responded very quickly to create a robust plan to address the required improvements identified in the last inspection. The drive and vision behind this plan is shared across all staff and governors. There is a real sense of ownership, shared responsibility and commitment across the staff team including governors, to bring about significant change quickly. The school development plan is very detailed and provides clear direction, you have established baselines and appropriate success criteria by which to measure the impact of the planned activities.

You have wasted no time in addressing the need to improve the consistency of teaching and provided valuable training for teachers to: support planning for the different needs of pupils; increase the amount of extended writing undertaken by pupils; provide systems to evidence pupils' learning thoroughly; increase the detail with which teachers mark pupils' work; and improve the quality of handwriting. The impact of these were clearly seen in pupils' books during the visit. Speaking to pupils they talked very enthusiastically about their learning and were able to explain what they need to do to improve their work.

The local authority has delivered whole staff training to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics. This work has provided staff with opportunities to plan collaboratively and explore ways in which resources in classrooms support better learning and progress in mathematics. Pupils spoke confidently about how the use of their maths 'grab bag' supports their learning. These bags, containing for example, a selection of resources including beads, counters, string, and number grids that pupils can elect to use when needed. Teachers' confidence to plan appropriately for the different mathematical abilities in their classrooms is growing. You are currently developing a very comprehensive framework for improving pupils' calculation skills in mathematics that will be used in all classrooms across the school: this framework will ensure that the most able are suitably challenged.

Monitoring processes are in place and clearly show that the training provided to teachers is having an impact on the progress pupils' are making. As part of these checks you speak to pupils weekly, about the work in their books and explore the quality of their learning; this allows you to evaluate the impact of the training you have put in place on pupils' learning. You have a very thorough plan for these monitoring activities which is shared with staff, and you insist that feedback from these exercises is shared with teachers quickly and regularly. This contributes significantly to an atmosphere of support and challenge, and staff spoke openly about the benefits of these processes on building their competences and confidence in the classroom.

You are instrumental in the creation and implementation of many of the initiatives across the school but also recognise the need to build leadership capacity to support

the further improvements required. Alongside governors you have given careful consideration to the future leadership structure across the school: this is a priority for the spring term.

The newly formed scrutiny committee, a sub group of the governing body regularly evaluate the activities implemented from the school development plan and the impact on pupils' learning and progress. You are very well supported by the Chair of the Governing Body and meet weekly together for discussion and challenge regarding the leadership and management of the school. Governors share your ambition for the school to become good, and are very encouraged by the commitment of staff to the initiatives and training that you are leading. Governors make regular visits to school. They make time to talk with teachers and spend time in lessons talking with pupils and looking at pupils' work. This allows them to explore for themselves the impact of these initiatives and training on the quality of teaching since the inspection last November.

Your staff are very clear of the priorities for the school, in particular the forensic focus on improving teaching. They are proud of their school, feel valued and support whole heartedly the drive for improvement you are leading.

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

External support has been provided from the local authority and a local National Leader in Education (NLE). This support has been regular and you have used this resource highly effectively. The creation of a project board involving external partners and governors provides regular scrutiny of pupil's progress information. The visits made by external partners to school provide you with opportunities for your work to be evaluated as well as plan specific training and discuss recruitment and future leadership structures for the school. The NLE has provided opportunities for staff to moderate pupils' work with staff from another school and some staff benefit from regular visits to observe and work alongside other teachers. The work undertaken by external partners is well documented and highly focused on evaluating the schools' progress since the inspection. There is a comprehensive plan in place for further support throughout the spring and summer term, including a full review of actions since the inspection by the local authority later in March.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Reeves
Associate Inspector