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Mrs Carol Singh
Acting Headteacher
Godolphin Junior School
Oatlands Drive
Slough
SL1 3HS

Dear Mrs Singh

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Godolphin Junior School

Following my visit to your academy on 4 March 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 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 academy should take further action to:

- sharpen the actions in the school improvement plan and include steps to measure the success of the actions linked to expected gains in pupils' achievement
- ensure senior and middle leaders regularly check the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' learning
- use external partners to validate the accuracy of assessments

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and two senior leaders, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, the Chair of the Godolphin Education Trust, a representative from the local authority and a group of pupils, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I toured the school with you and your senior leaders and met the staff during the lunch break. A range of documents were scrutinised which included the outcomes of monitoring activities and the impact of performance management. The academy improvement plan was evaluated.

Main findings

Prior to the inspection senior leaders and governors were aware that some aspects of the school's work required improvement. The outcome of the inspection was therefore not a surprise. Plans were already in place to support improvements in the quality of teaching. As a result of the inspection, the school improvement plan has been adjusted and is focused on the areas for improvement which were identified at the time of the inspection. However, there are a large number of key actions, several of which are common to more than one objective. The plan would benefit from streamlining actions where similarities exist. Small steps to identify the actions that teachers and teaching assistant need to take to successfully achieve the desired target would strengthen the plan. In addition, milestones to record the expected gains in pupils' achievement will help staff, senior leaders and governors to know when their actions have been successful. Currently the plan does not make clear how senior leaders and governors will measure the impact of the planned actions.

The school has a wealth of information about pupils' attainment and progress, but senior leaders and external partners have not checked the accuracy of this information. School leaders know that assessments need to be reliable for teachers to plan work that matches the learning needs of all groups of pupils effectively.

You and your senior leaders have developed a new marking and feedback policy which has recently been implemented. Pupils are positive about the new system and understand the colours that teachers use to show them what they have done well and what they need to do to further improve their work. Pupils know that time is set aside for them to respond to teachers' feedback and this has helped them to improve their work. Pupils have noticed that teachers are using displays in classrooms to help their learning. They also say that behaviour is improving and that the rewards and sanctions used by teachers help them to strive to do their best in lessons.

The governing body has already taken steps to increase its effectiveness. A timely external review of governance has been completed. The committee structure has been revised to help governors to have a better understanding the work of the

school and check on the school's progress more effectively. Governors are developing an action plan to support their work further. Training is underway to increase governors' understanding of pupil performance information so that they can challenge leaders and hold them to account more effectively.

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

External support

The school is making effective use of the support provided by a range of partners, including a National Leader of Education, a leadership consultant who carried out the review of governance and a local authority officer. Training to develop the skills of middle leaders is underway. School leaders should now use external support to check on the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' achievement.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector