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Mrs Anne-Louise Payne
Interim Headteacher
Cuddington Community Primary School
Salisbury Road
Worcester Park
KT4 7DD

Dear Mrs Payne

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Cuddington Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 27 April 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 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:

- improve governors' first-hand knowledge of the school's work and their questioning of senior leaders
- produce a longer-term school improvement plan with clear targets against which success can be measured
- develop the roles of teachers as subject leaders.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, other senior staff, your leadership partner, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school

improvement plan and other documents, including minutes of meetings, school self-evaluation and data showing the progress made by pupils. Together, we visited all classes during lesson times.

Context

Since the inspection and my last monitoring visit, you have taken over as interim headteacher. You have a leadership partner, whose services are brokered by the local authority. Like you, he is employed by The Howard Partnership Trust, a multi-academy trust.

There have also been many changes in the membership of the governing body, including a new Chair and vice-chair. Staffing, however, has remained stable.

Main findings

One of the key concerns at, and after, the inspection was the effectiveness of the governing body. The review of governance was usefully carried out and its recommendations are being helpfully implemented. After a valuable contribution from an interim Chair, another experienced Chair has now been appointed. Working closely with the new vice-chair, she is overseeing necessary root and branch change. Governors now understand correctly the purposes, responsibilities and limits of their role. Many are undertaking considerable useful training. They learn usefully at first-hand about the school at work by making better-organised visits during the school day. For good reason, the Chair wants to develop these visits further so that they are more closely aligned with the school improvement plan. Governors are asking better and more challenging questions of senior staff. However, some questions are too general or wide in scope. They could be focused more specifically, in order to elicit deeper, more precise, answers.

Governors are well placed to make forthcoming key decisions about the future direction of the school and its leadership. They are well informed about the different options available.

You lead the school with determination and clear purpose and are well supported by the leadership partner. You have successfully galvanised the commitment of staff, providing them with effective support and appropriate accountability. This has led to improvements in teaching. The new 'learning at your fingertips' document, which has been produced by the school to identify what leads to good teaching and learning, is useful in this respect. The deputy headteacher has improved considerably the way in which data showing pupils' progress and attainment is organised and used. Staff have better knowledge of it. Regular progress meetings, which are part of a new well-organised assessment cycle, help teachers to check on the development of each pupil. We noted during our lesson visits that teachers now set work which more closely meets the individual needs of pupils. Consequently,

pupils are more fully challenged. The data indicates that pupils' progress is improving and you expect better outcomes overall at the end of each key stage this year.

The gap between the attainment of pupils entitled to the support of the pupil premium and their classmates has narrowed a little. This is, however, a mixed picture, and is better in some year groups than in others. You have taken sensible steps to reconsider how this funding should be spent and its impact measured.

You have made important, positive changes to many school procedures. For example, the performance management of staff is now more robustly organised. This helps staff to improve their teaching and ensures they are more accountable for how well their pupils learn. Some staff have taken on subject leadership responsibilities, which are reflected in their performance targets, but not all. You are aware that the curriculum offered to pupils needs to be broadened further. At present, the lack of subject leaders hinders this.

The school improvement plan is a useful working document which helpfully guides improvement. You keep a useful record of actions taken and their impact. However, the plan is only for a short-term period. Targets for longer-term improvement are not precise enough or linked to pupils' achievement.

In the lessons we visited together, we noted that, for the most part, pupils engaged well with the tasks set. For example, children in Reception relished, and fluently explained, their learning during a 'bear hunt'. Across the school, when appropriate, pupils helped each other and discussed ideas together keenly. They enjoyed challenging, practical tasks. In some lessons, they became too noisy, however. You explained that this was as a result of their excitement at having more opportunities to discuss their work. We agreed that it would be useful to establish clearer ground rules with pupils about the loudness of discussions without reducing their enthusiasm.

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 provides much valuable support to the school, mainly through a private sector contractor. This is at many levels, strategic and operational. It has helped the school move forwards well from a difficult position just a few months ago. The leadership reviewer evaluates the school thoroughly. She rightly notes the considerable improvement but also that there is much more yet to do.

The leadership partner is developing a new assessment system, not dependent on levels and sub-levels. He and others have thought it through carefully. Rightly, you are considering its possible future value to the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Robin Hammerton
Her Majesty's Inspector