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8 June 2015

Mrs Judith Osler
Executive Headteacher
Trumpington Meadows Primary School
Kestrel Rise
Trumpington
Cambridge
CB2 9AY

Dear Mrs Osler

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Trumpington Meadows Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 5 June 2015 I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in May 2014. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Cambridgeshire.

Yours sincerely

Peter Limm
Additional Inspector

cc. Chair of the Governing Body, Trumpington Meadows Primary School
cc. Adrian Loades, Director of Children's Services for Cambridgeshire local authority

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2014

- Improve teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement, particularly in writing and in the development of essential reading skills, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of the progress all pupils can make, and the standards more able pupils, in particular, are capable of reaching
 - ensuring that teachers take account of what pupils already know, understand and can do so that past learning is built on well, and pupils do not lose interest because of activities that are too hard or too easy
 - ensuring that teachers frequently check on the pace of pupils' learning, especially in English in Years 3 to 6, so that they can move the pupils on more quickly or give them more support as appropriate
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their skill in writing at length for different purposes, especially in Years 3 to 6
 - making sure that basic skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar are given good attention in Years 3 to 6
 - ensuring that teaching develops essential reading skills effectively
 - providing feedback to pupils, orally and through marking, so that they know clearly what they have done well and what they need to do better.

- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and the pace of improvement by:
 - using a range of information to rigorously analyse the extent to which teaching in different subjects and classes supports learning for all pupils
 - using this analysis to take swift action to rectify weaknesses that limit learning across the school, and for groups of pupils, including the more able
 - ensuring that all teachers with significant responsibilities drive improvements in their areas.

An external review of governance, including the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the third monitoring inspection on 5 June 2015

Evidence

The inspector met with the executive headteacher and other key leaders in the school, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with a second representative of the local authority. The inspector observed four lessons during which he looked at pupils' books and other work.

Context

A Year 1 teacher has left and been replaced by an experienced teacher. A Year 3/4 teacher has left and been replaced temporarily by an agency teacher. There has been no decision about the school becoming an academy.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The executive headteacher, staff and governors have continued to address well the areas for development identified by the section 5 inspection. The senior leadership team work well together to drive forward the improvement plans and to ensure that changes are understood by all staff. This is particularly the case with monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching so that, despite changes to staffing, the improvements noted during the previous monitoring inspection have continued to be effective.

Staff have adopted the improvements in the teaching of phonics well and pupils observed in lessons demonstrated a good grasp of the key skills. Teachers now interpret the marking policy much better than before, and pupils said that they value their teachers' comments. Reading skills continue to be developed well, particularly in Years 1 to 4. Similarly, the more able writers continue to be challenged to write at greater length and with more sophistication. As a consequence of these developments, the school's assessment information shows clearly that pupils in Years 1 to 4 have made much better progress in their learning than at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils in the mixed Year 5 and 6 group have also made accelerated progress. However, the attainment of pupils in this group has remained slow despite a full programme of additional support. The number of pupils in Year 6 in this group is small and some have not responded well enough to the new approaches adopted by the school to close the attainment gap.

The experienced governing body continues to develop its skills well and, as a consequence, it challenges leaders more rigorously about pupils' performance and the quality of teaching. The governors' tracking of the progress made by disadvantaged pupils has been tightened further. Many of these pupils are making better progress than at the time of the last section 5 inspection. The governing body is particularly aware of the slow progress made by some Year 6 pupils and has

regularly sought information about how well new approaches are being implemented to address this issue. The governors are justifiably pleased with the faster rate of progress made by pupils in other year groups.

Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- The senior leadership team has strengthened further its capacity to drive forward the school's improvement plan. One of the assistant headteachers now monitors the quality of teaching and learning, and this has given the executive headteacher more time to review and evaluate other aspects of school improvement.
- Middle leaders have supported the senior leaders well in securing the effective adoption of new initiatives and in helping to monitor and evaluate their impact.
- Teachers are more confident in using assessment information to track pupils' progress and plan effective support for those whose progress is slower than expected.
- Teachers have responded well to implementing new initiatives and training events designed to improve aspects of their teaching. As a consequence, the rate of pupils' progress has quickened in all year groups since the last monitoring inspection.
- The governing body has strengthened its governance of the school still further, so that more rigorous challenge is balanced with appropriate support. Governors understand well the main strengths and weaknesses of the school and have worked well with senior leaders to keep a tight focus on improving pupils' learning and achievement.
- Pupils value the feedback comments that teachers write in their books and say that this process helps them to reflect on how to improve their own work.

Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- A number of pupils in Year 6 are still not making sufficient progress to close the gap in attainment between them and other Year 6 pupils nationally. Although a number of initiatives and support packages have been adopted to address the problem, they have not had the required impact in raising the achievement of these pupils, many of whom are new to the school.
- Staff changes have not weakened the quality of teaching in the school but there are some inconsistencies in the way teachers follow the school's marking policy. This was evident in pupils' books seen during the inspection, where some teachers' comments were not clear enough to help pupils to improve their work. Pupils said that they needed further guidance to help them to respond effectively.
- Although behaviour around the school and in most lessons is calm and sensible, inattentive behaviour by a small number of pupils sometimes slows the pace of progress. Pupils confirmed that one or two teachers did not manage this form of behaviour firmly or quickly enough.
- Despite the school's focus on improving pupils' presentation in books, some work remains untidy. Some pupils do not complete their tasks and it is not clear how

teachers go about checking whether this is because of a lack of understanding or a lack of effort.

- Although the most-able pupils are challenged effectively to produce better quality writing, these pupils are still not consistently challenged enough overall.

External support

The local authority continues to support the school well. The governing body and staff value this support highly. This is particularly the case when local authority school improvement and advisory support leads to clear improvements in pupils' learning and achievement, such as in literacy and numeracy for all pupils in the school. The local authority is very aware that although there have been significant improvements in pupils' progress in the mixed Year 5 and 6, these have not been rapid enough for some Year 6 pupils.