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Rosalyn Peet
Brackley Church of England Junior School
Manor Road
Brackley
NN13 6EE

Dear Mrs Peet

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Brackley Church of England Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 17 June 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 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. The school should take further action to:

- Improve the post Ofsted action plan so that:
 - it clearly sets out the actions that the school will take to address the areas recorded in the inspection report
 - all the key actions, such as the purchase of an online tracking system, are clearly recorded
 - the induction programme for new staff is clearly set out
 - it is clear who is monitoring that an action has been completed and how they will know
 - the role of governors in securing the necessary improvements is clear
 - governors are able to hold school leaders to account.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the senior lead teacher (English lead), Director of Training and Development, a member of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also met with the two members of the senior leadership team and three middle leaders to review the improvements they have made in their subjects. I looked at a small sample of pupils' books and evaluated the school development plan. I also accompanied the headteacher on a tour of the school. I reviewed the support the local authority has provided including the work of the Senior School Improvement Manager. I checked the single central record.

Context

Since the last inspection there have been a significant number of staffing changes including the resignation of the deputy headteacher. Consequently four of the classes will have new teachers in September three of whom will be newly qualified teachers. The senior teacher will take up the role of deputy headteacher in September. Six teaching assistants, including two higher level teaching assistants, have also resigned. School leaders have successfully recruited five teaching assistants for September. Overall, in September, a third of the school staff will be new to the school since the section 5 inspection.

There have also been two resignations from the Governing Body since the section 5 inspection. The Governing Body have replaced one governor and two more governors will join in September.

The school joined Fairfield Teaching Alliance in April 2015. The alliance will meet a significant proportion of the staff training needs.

Main findings

School leaders have responded promptly and effectively to address the issues identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school has put in place a development plan with the support of the local authority.

The school development plan addresses the issues identified in the recent Ofsted report. However the plan is not as clear and focussed as it needs to be. The priorities are addressed within more global priorities in a broader plan rather than specifically focussing on the areas for improvement set out in the inspection report. As a result it is difficult for governors to identify actions that relate to specific areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. The plan includes most of the constituent elements of a good action plan but it does not clearly record who will monitor the completion of each action. Similarly, in some cases the person leading the action is also the person monitoring that it has been completed. This is not ideal as it does not allow for helpful scrutiny and accountability. In addition the plan does

not show the resource implications of some key actions such as the purchase and implementation of a new online tracking system. It is not clear therefore that the school will be in a position to follow such actions through.

The school has a separate document which allows school leaders, including governors, to track their progress against each development priority. School leaders have introduced an online system for tracking pupil progress. It is still relatively new to the school and although it has not yet made a difference to the rates of progress that pupils make, it enables school leaders to track pupil progress rigorously and hold staff to account. The system also enables teachers to identify gaps in pupils learning.

School leaders have continued to work to raise the expectations of staff including, taking appropriate and effective action to review, and when necessary revise, policies and practice such as: behaviour, marking, handwriting and presentation. It is evident from a small sample of books that there are signs of improvement to marking and presentation. School leaders have continued to improve teaching by regular monitoring and feedback. They have put in place an induction programme to support the teachers who will be joining the school in September, but this programme does not set out how school leaders will ensure that these teachers will be supported to become highly effective.

School leaders commissioned an external consultant to review the provision they are making for disadvantaged pupils receiving the pupil premium grant. As a result the school leaders have made improvements to their practice not least by ensuring that all teachers know who these pupils are and how they must ensure that they make expected or more than expected progress. Leaders have also established a lead governor for pupil premium and they now report on the progress of disadvantaged pupils at every meeting of the Governing Body.

The external review of the Governing Body is underway.

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

External support

The local authority is providing effective support to the school including that provided by the Senior School Improvement Manager. The local authority have held a 'Pre warning Notice' meeting with the school to share their concerns about the school and to agree a way forward. Consequently the local authority have supported and challenged the leadership of the school and brokered school to school support.

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

Yours sincerely

Derek Myers
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Chair of the Governing Body
- Local authority
- Diocese