

PROTECT-INSPECTION

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Mr Simon Jackson
Headteacher
Edward Feild Primary School
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Dear Mr Jackson

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Edward Feild Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 30 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 March 2015. 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 quality of teaching further by developing the role of teaching assistants so they build their skills and expertise more fully
- ensure the most able pupils are challenged sufficiently in lessons, so more achieve higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, two members of the governing body, including the Chair, a representative from the local authority and a National Leader of Education from Thomas Reade Primary School, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school's action plan. In addition, I scrutinised other school documentation, including records of leaders' monitoring activities. I joined you on a tour of the school and visited every class, taking the opportunity to talk to pupils about their learning. The school's single central record was checked.

Context

Since the previous inspection, there have been some changes to staffing. Leadership roles have been reorganised and you are working towards fully implementing a new structure from September 2015. From September 2015, the leadership of Key Stage 1 will be shared by one of the assistant headteachers and a class teacher. The governing body has elected a new Chair and vice-chair.

Two part-time teachers and one teacher with responsibility for Reception aged children are leaving at the end of term. Two new teachers are joining and several teachers are moving year groups.

From September 2015, the school will expand and increase its admission number from 45 to 60, taking a new group of Reception children each year. Building work to convert the computer room to a new classroom will take place over the school holidays.

Main findings

You and the governors have wasted no time in beginning the process of change and addressing the key priorities. The inspection judgement, while disappointing, matched your own assessment of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Consequently, work to address the areas requiring improvement is well underway. You have promptly set in motion a strong impetus to improve to become a good school.

You, together with support from the local authority, have written a useful improvement plan. The improvement plan has clear objectives linked to the right priorities. The plan sets out helpful measures linked to each area for improvement. Leaders undertake a variety of monitoring activities more regularly, including checks on the quality of teaching and looking at pupils' work. This helps leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching so you can match support closely to where it is needed most.

Work to improve the quality of teaching is of high quality and well targeted to where it is of most benefit. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving. Teachers make

regular visits to observe teaching in two local schools, Thameside Primary School and Thomas Reade Primary School, which is a National Support School. New ways of planning have been introduced and teachers are becoming more proficient at using a range of resources to inspire pupils' writing. For example, in Key Stage 1, children listened attentively to the story 'Wolves' as the stimulus to their tasks. In the best practice, teachers ensure carefully targeted questioning moves learning on rapidly. For example, in a Year 6 writing lesson, the teacher persistently challenged pupils to explain their word choices when writing in the first person. As a result, pupils were able to edit their work confidently, improve their efforts and made good progress. Teaching assistants offer helpful support when pupils are engaged in independent tasks. However, during some points in lessons, their contributions have less impact.

Attainment is improving. Unvalidated results at the end of Year 6 and Year 2 this year show more pupils are achieving the levels expected for their age than in the past. Leaders now track the progress of pupils more carefully. Pupil targets inform discussions with teachers more specifically than in the past. This is strengthening accountability by linking teachers' performance more closely to the progress of all pupils in their class. Governors find the school performance information presented helpful and underachievement is identified more quickly. Governors acknowledge that further training in how to interrogate the school's performance data would enhance their understanding and facilitate even greater challenge to school leaders.

The quality of teachers' marking and feedback is developing well. You have redesigned the school timetable in order to allow every child to participate in a daily 'next steps' session which allows pupils to reflect regularly on their learning. It also helps teachers to move learning on more rapidly by filling gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding more routinely. Pupils are clear about their personal learning targets in each lesson. As a result, they are making more rapid progress, particularly in mathematics and writing.

Pupils' learning behaviour is improving. You have introduced higher expectations of their productivity in lessons. Pupils now understand what is required to learn well so start tasks promptly and settle quickly. There is a greater emphasis on sharing ideas and learning from each other. Pupils in a Year 3 and 4 class keenly considered words to describe a setting, using classmates' ideas effectively to develop their own descriptive vocabulary. Some Key Stage 1 classrooms lack organisation and order which limits productive working.

Standards in writing are improving. Pupils now write more often and have regular opportunities to hone their skills through the introduction of daily skills workshops. Pupils, including those who are underachieving or disadvantaged, are well supported. Visits such as to The Story Museum in Oxford and the newly forged partnership with students from Oxford University, are helping pupils to enjoy writing and develop their skills. Consequently, pupils enjoyment of, and engagement in, writing is improving. On occasion, in writing and mathematics, there is a lack of

challenge for the most able pupils and they do not achieve the high standards they are capable of.

Governors share your commitment to improving the school and are providing useful challenge and support. Although the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body are relatively new, they have wasted no time in ensuring that governors know the school well and act as 'agents of change'. Already this term, governors have reviewed their roles and responsibilities. The work of the newly formed communications committee is particularly noteworthy. Following consultation with parents, systems to establish more regular and engaging ways of communicating with families are developing well. The governing body acts as an astute conduit, firmly strengthening the link between school and parents.

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 has responded promptly and provided extensive support to school leaders, including by forming a team around the school. Visits from the early years, inclusion and English consultants have helped to improve teaching. Useful support has been brokered from a National Leader of Education from Thomas Read Primary School who is providing helpful challenge to you. Links with the National Support School are providing opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Farr
Her Majesty's Inspector