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8 July 2015

Beverley Dandy
Headteacher
Outwoods Primary School
Southlands
Atherstone
CV9 1EH

Dear Mrs Dandy

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Outwoods Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 7 July 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:

- sharpen the action plan by clearly stating how each action will be monitored
- set specific dates for each milestone to be achieved
- quicken the pace of change to ensure pupils benefit from improvements as soon as possible
- ensure actions are consistent across the school, such as improvements in pupils' work as a result of teachers' feedback
- complete the actions recommended in the review of governance.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the deputy headteacher and five members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority to discuss how they

have supported the school. The school's action plan and other documents, such as monitoring records, were evaluated. A learning walk was undertaken with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Pupils' books were scrutinised, along with the most recent attainment data and the school's safeguarding records.

Context

Since the last full inspection, there have been some internal movements of staff. A temporary Early Years Foundation Stage leader has been appointed for September to cover a maternity leave. A new Year 4 teacher has been appointed to start in September. A governor has been given responsibility for analysing the school's assessment information, from a governor's perspective.

Main findings

Leaders have risen to the challenge of improving the school to be good or better at the next full inspection and now have higher expectations of staff. Teachers have taken on board most of the changes leaders have introduced, such as developing pupils' mental mathematics skills in Year 5 and 6. Leaders know that not all changes are yet embedded across the school. For example, there are inconsistencies in teachers' marking of pupils' work. Leaders are aware of the importance to ensure consistent improvements occur as quickly as possible, so that pupils benefit at the earliest opportunity.

The action plan is detailed and contains all the areas for improvement recommended as a result of the last full inspection. However, it is not easy to track how each action is monitored and a few milestones do not have a specific date by which they will be achieved. There are early signs that the school's actions are ensuring pupils' progress is better, especially in mathematics and reading. A range of training for teachers and teaching assistants has taken place this term. Further training is planned for the autumn term 2015. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and a member of the governing body plan to use information gained from an Ofsted 'Getting to Good' seminar attended last week, to improve the school action plan, monitoring procedures and the work of the governing body. Appropriate plans are in place to assign teachers to different year groups in September, in order to use staff strengths and provide additional support for teachers where it is needed.

Pupils' books show that the majority of staff are applying the school's new marking policy. All work is marked and there is evidence that teachers' feedback leads to improvements in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. However, this is not always the case as some teachers do not ensure that pupils use the information to improve their work. Some written feedback from teachers is too detailed and does not lead to pupils improving their work. Leaders agree that feedback needs to be clear, manageable and consistently supports pupils' progress across the school. The school has received some initial 2015 attainment data for pupils in Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6, although some of this information is yet to be confirmed. The overall picture of attainment is an improving one in most areas, although some areas, such as writing, have declined. Leaders recognise the need to focus on writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar, to ensure these areas are at least in line with

national averages. Leaders are pleased with the initial picture of pupils' progress demonstrated by this year's results.

An external review of governance was recommended after the last full inspection and has recently taken place. While it is too early to measure the impact of the governance review, it highlights both strengths and areas where governance can improve to further support and challenge the school. Governors understand the need to effectively monitor, evaluate and question the actions school leaders are taking to quicken the pace of improvement. Whilst they have not yet seen the final version, governors expressed their overall support of the recommended areas for development contained within the review of governance.

The recommended external review of pupil premium spending has not yet taken place due to availability, but has been arranged for September 2015.

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

You have received two visits from the local authority since the school's last full inspection. Three local authority officers visited in June to quality assure the school's work. The draft written report of this visit was received on the day of my visit. Leaders feel that the recommendations from the draft report are fair and have evidence to show that they have already started working on some of them. It is too early to measure the full impact of the local authority's support to help the school improve. However, a positive relationship has been built with the school and the local authority has appropriate plans to continue its support. The local authority rightly judges that the school has the capacity to make the improvements that are necessary for it to be judged good at its next full inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Stuart Bellworthy

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy