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Dear Mrs Lipski

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Parsloes Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 29 September 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 April 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that leaders undertake regular and rigorous checks to make sure teaching is securely and typically good and, where applicable, accelerates the academic progress for identified pupils
- devise a strategic plan with the local authority to secure long-term, sustainable improvements for the school
- strengthen the school's plan for improvement to include criteria by which leaders and governors can measure the impact of their actions on pupils' outcomes.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, two members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, the consultant headteacher and the

auditor of the pupil premium review. The school's plan for improvement was also scrutinised. Visits were made to a sample of lessons with senior leaders and discussions held with staff. A range of documents were scrutinised, including the pupil premium report and the school's own assessment information about standards and progress in English and mathematics.

Context

Since the inspection in April 2015 the Chair of Governors has stepped down. The vice-chair is undertaking the role in the interim. Two teachers and a member of the senior leadership team left in the summer term. The senior post remains vacant and you reported that recruitment is on hold since the leadership structure is under review.

Main findings

Since the previous section 5 inspection, your leadership commitment to the school has remained strong. At the start of this term you have begun to address improving the quality of teaching through the implementation of a coaching programme and a new approach for the teaching of writing. A consultant headteacher has been deployed to provide additional leadership support for you, but evidence of the impact of this is not apparent yet. Recently, teachers visited an outstanding school to observe effective teaching. Furthermore, an independent review of the school's use of the pupil premium fund is under way but yet to be completed.

The evidence gathered during my visit shows these actions have only just commenced. Consequently, they have yet to show any demonstrable impact on outcomes for pupils. For example, in July, for the third consecutive year, the proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching the expected level in writing was too low. Also, gaps in attainment for disadvantaged pupils compared to their peers widened in writing. Furthermore, at the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in writing remains low.

Information about the academic progress in other year groups shows that pupils do not achieve as well as they could. For example, the gaps in English and mathematics are not closing fast enough for some disadvantaged pupils.

By contrast, assessment information about the youngest children shows the proportion reaching good levels of development by the end of Reception is now in line with the national figure. This is due to the good progress made by children in the early years.

Our joint visits to classrooms revealed inconsistency in the implementation of the school's expectations for marking pupils' work. For example, several pupils have received little or no feedback to support their progress since the start of the year.

Mathematics work in lessons observed was not providing sufficient challenge for some pupils.

Teachers have received limited assessment information about pupils' starting points. As a result, assessment information is not being used effectively to inform teaching that meets pupils' needs. You have implemented a new tracking system to address this. However, this is not fully effective or implemented. Furthermore, academic targets for individual pupils, groups or classes have not been set for this academic year.

You have reflected the recommendations identified at the previous inspection as priorities in the school's plan for improvement. However, the plan lacks precision in detailing when actions will be evaluated for their impact and effectiveness. It is not clear how the actions will improve pupils' academic progress, including, especially, for those who are disadvantaged. The plan also lacks detail about how staff training will develop their professional skills in teaching pupils mathematical competency.

The governing body recognise the need to increase the pace of change and leadership capacity. It has secured the appointment of a consultant headteacher, with advice from the local authority. This support has been critical in providing recent professional development for leaders.

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 formally acknowledges their concern about the lack of pace in improvement. However, beyond the commissioning and appointment of the consultant headteacher, the absence of a strategic plan to support the priorities or their sustainability is limiting the pace of improvement.

I am copying this letter to the acting Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Barking and Dagenham.

Yours sincerely

Kirstie Fulthorpe
Her Majesty's Inspector