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Penelope Sheppard
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Sheppard

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Queen's Hill Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 19 January 2016, 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 June 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its section 5 inspection before the one that took place in June 2015, the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, subject leaders, the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The Ofsted action plan and school improvement plan were evaluated. We observed early-morning booster lessons for Year 6 and observed teaching and learning in every class for a short time.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection, which judged the school to require improvement, two new phase leaders have been appointed and a new class teacher has joined the school. Three new governors have joined the governing body. A new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed.

Main findings

Since the last inspection you, senior leaders and governors have made a good start at addressing the key issues for improvement. You have put in place several programmes that are beginning to raise pupil achievement in English and mathematics, for example the very popular breakfast club for Year 6 pupils, which has almost 100% take-up. After breakfast the pupils work on improving their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. This has proved particularly helpful to those pupils who have transferred from different schools during Key Stage 2. School performance information indicates that all pupils are making good progress from when the breakfast club started at the start of this term. The whole-school basic skills programme in mathematics has improved pupils' instant recall of number facts. As a result, pupils are quicker at adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing numbers, they get more work done in lessons and they are more confident in deciding which strategy to use when solving number problems.

You have ensured that teachers get the right support and development to improve their teaching. The new development leaders are working very successfully with all teachers to identify their training needs. Teachers are very enthusiastic about this new approach and value the opportunity to talk in depth about how to improve pupils' learning. Since the programme began in September 2015, you and external consultants have judged teaching to be consistently good across the school. You and senior leaders ensure that teachers are held to account for the progress pupils make through rigorous, half-termly pupil progress meetings.

You have strengthened middle leadership by making sure all leaders have a good grasp of the requirements of the new curriculum in their subject areas. They are not yet monitoring pupils' progress across the school in foundation subjects because the main focus has been on improving pupils' achievement in mathematics and English.

The Ofsted action plan is focused on the key issues from the last inspection but does not reflect the full impact of the effective action that you and the staff have taken to address these issues. The school improvement plan is based on Ofsted judgement areas rather than on your accurate identification of what you and the staff must do next to raise pupil achievement.

Governors have good systems in place to check how well the school is getting on. Two of the recently appointed governors have a wealth of experience and are

making sure less experienced governors know how to challenge as well as support school 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 is giving good support to the school. The Norfolk Better to Best adviser is particularly effective in making sure senior leaders focus their attention on the key issues from the last inspection. The Better to Best programme has enabled the school to make a link with a national leader in education, who has introduced and supported a number of effective school improvement strategies.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Norfolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Winyard
Her Majesty's Inspector