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28 June 2013

Ms Fiona Cullen
Nelson Primary School
Napier Road
London
E6 2SE

Dear Ms Cullen

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Nelson Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 28 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. 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 January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, a group of teachers, the Chair and members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plans and other documents were evaluated. I looked at some pupils' work and joined you on a tour of the school.

Context

There have been some changes to staffing since January. An existing teacher has been appointed as the new maths co-ordinator and will take up this responsibility in September. Two newly qualified teachers have been recruited and are already working at the school. A year group leader and a co-ordinator for information technology, as well as three classroom teachers will leave the school this term. You are still recruiting for teachers to cover these vacancies. Some posts which have an additional responsibility for teaching and learning, are likely to remain unfilled in September.

Main findings

The school improvement plan shows a clear understanding of the improvements needed. It has allowed you to regularly review and evaluate the progress you are making. You have set clear targets and are making steady progress towards them. The roles of the governing body and local authority in supporting, monitoring and evaluating improvements need to be made clearer.

Significant improvements in your systems for analysing information have resulted in all staff being aware of how individuals and groups of pupils are performing. Middle leaders now ensure that teachers are using this information to teach lessons that take account of every pupil's needs. This has resulted in improved rates of progress and when progress is less than good, it is recognised, allowing further interventions to be made. Training for middle leaders and classroom teachers has ensured that assessments are now accurate and further progress can be measured across all year groups.

Standards in mathematics are still below average and you have correctly identified that this remains a priority. You have successfully recruited a mathematics co-ordinator for September. He has been given the responsibility for agreeing non-negotiable standards across all year groups that will lead to improved rates of pupil progress. You are also working on developing writing skills to bring them into line with the improvements achieved in reading.

Professional training opportunities have been carefully planned and link closely to the needs of individuals and the improvement plan for the school. This has included training in how to improve the teaching of reading and mathematics across the school. Teachers and middle managers say they are more effective because they now recognise what needs to be done and have a better understanding of how to do it. You are increasingly holding teachers to account for improving rates of pupil progress. You monitor this closely through meetings, assessment information and observations of teaching.

Governors continue to support and challenge school leaders. They are determined that the school improves quickly and work closely with you to ensure that this happens. They participate in the training opportunities offered to staff and are well informed about how much progress pupils are making. They monitor the impact new improvements are having on the quality of teaching and learning.

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:

- amend the school improvement plan to include how leaders, governors and the local authority will monitor improvements to ensure that pupils make improved rates of progress
- provide further training ,strong support and challenge for teachers so that standards in mathematics and writing improve and all pupils make good or better progress
- appoint high quality applicants to posts with teaching and learning responsibilities to ensure that standards are maintained.

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

You are developing stronger links with partnerships such as Newham Partnership Working, local schools and training providers, such as The Institute of Education, to provide support and professional development for teachers. This has contributed to improved standards of teaching and learning in the classroom.

The local authority continues to provide light touch support. It has arranged for good quality training for governors and newly qualified teachers to take place. It has also facilitated opportunities for teachers to moderate the quality of pupil's work with other schools to ensure assessments are accurate. The local authority has undertaken to provide further support to help address your recruitment concerns for September.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley Cox

Her Majesty's Inspector