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Sara Bennett & Tamar McCarthy
Headteachers
Holbrook Primary School
Gateside Road
Coventry
CV6 6FR

Dear Mrs Bennett and Mrs McCarthy

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Holbrook Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 2 April 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the 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 January 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection and plans are not sharply focused on rapidly bringing about improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- include specific measurable targets and timescales in the school improvement plan
- urgently organise training and support to develop governors' independent understanding of information on pupils' achievement.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, the Chair of Governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. A range of documentation was reviewed including the latest information about pupils' progress and feedback to teachers following lesson observations and reviews of pupils' work. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

Context

Since the last inspection, two governors have left and two new governors have been appointed. A member of staff has returned from maternity leave. Governors have appointed an additional teaching assistant to support pupils' learning.

Main findings

You have amended the school improvement plan to include the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. However, the plan does not contain specific measurable targets against which the school can monitor and evaluate the impact of actions taken. It also lacks an indication of the time-scales to which the school is operating. As a result, there is a lack of clarity about what the school needs to do to become 'good' or an appropriate timescale for the planned improvements.

Governance has not improved. Governors do not have a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to be 'good'. They do not fully understand information about pupils' achievement or how pupils' progress and attainment compare to those of pupils' nationally. Governors are aware that some teaching requires improvement. However, they are not checking carefully enough that your actions and those of other senior leaders are helping pupils of different abilities make better progress in all classes and subjects. As a result, governors are not well-informed about the challenges facing the school and are not holding school leaders to account for their work.

You and other senior leaders frequently monitor teaching and pupils' achievement. Feedback to teachers identifies successful practice and where further improvements are required. When weaknesses are identified you make arrangements for teachers to receive appropriate support to help them to improve their practice. Your records show that there have been some improvements in some aspects of teaching. However, you rightly identify that these improvements are not yet consistent enough to help pupils of different abilities make better progress in all classes.

You have quickly taken a range of actions to address the behaviour issues identified at the last inspection. Pupils understand the systems in place to address poor behaviour. They value the 'triangles' and the 'cards' used by teachers to monitor and manage behaviour during lessons. They say that the new 'stuck stations' help them to 'keep trying and finish their work'. Pupils feel that behaviour in lessons has improved. Comments include, 'There is less shouting-out in lessons now.' 'People get on with their work more and don't mess around so much.' Your records show fewer incidents of poor behaviour.

You have taken urgent action to improve pupils' attendance. You have improved your systems for communicating with parents. When compared to the same period

last year, attendance has improved. Your latest information shows that attendance is currently at national average.

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 increased the level of support it offers to the school. Through the local authority partnership review group meetings and the regular visits from the local authority adviser you receive an appropriate level of support and challenge. The first partnership review meeting is booked for the end of April 2014. A full review of the governing body will take place on 3 April 2014. Please send copies of these reports to me. The local authority adviser has helped you to take suitable action to identify more-able children in Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. As a result, there are sharper systems in place for checking children's progress in this key stage.

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

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Mottram
Her Majesty's Inspector