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Susannah Bellingham
Headteacher
Brunswick Park Primary School
Picton Street
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SE5 7QH

Dear Ms Bellingham

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Brunswick Park Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 22 April 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 November 2014. 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:

- Strengthen the school action plan so that it clearly identifies how the success of actions will be measured at each checkpoint
- analyse pupil attendance information, so support and intervention can be adapted to meet the needs of pupils and improve attendance.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, a group of pupils, a range of teachers, the Vice Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also spoke to the Chair of the Governing Body by phone. The school action plan and a range of other school evidence were evaluated. I visited lessons

jointly with the headteacher in all year groups, except Year 3 who were on a residential visit on the day of the inspection.

Context

Since the previous inspection six supply teachers have left the school and three supply teachers have joined the school. One permanent class teacher has been appointed. The school business manager left the school and has been replaced by a new member of staff. A new premises team comprising two members of staff has been appointed. A deputy headteacher and a phase leader have been appointed and will take up their posts in September 2015. At the time of the inspection the school was undertaking a restructure of support staff.

Main findings

The headteacher and senior leaders have acted swiftly to tackle the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Leaders at all levels have shown strong commitment and tenacity in tackling long standing barriers to improvement.

Senior leaders have made clear the expectation that all pupils need to make good progress regardless of their background, disability or special education need. More regular, focused checks on pupil learning and the quality of teaching have helped to reinforce these higher expectations and ensure greater consistency in teaching. Feedback to staff has helped drive improvements in pupils' writing, presentation and handwriting.

Despite more teaching being good over time, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain, particularly in Year 2 and 3. Leaders have identified that there is still teaching which requires improvement. They acknowledge that pockets of inconsistency must be eradicated as a matter of urgency to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to catch-up from their historical underachievement. Where teaching is not good over time, this is still due to activities failing to challenge pupils sufficiently. This is most notable in mathematics, where some pupil books show an over-dependence on tasks which allow little opportunity for pupils to explore mathematical calculations. This limits their ability to develop calculation skills that will drive their progress more rapidly. Pupils across the school are not given enough opportunities to consider 'why' and 'what if' when exploring calculations.

The local authority, other external partners and senior leaders have helped to ensure that middle leaders quickly benefitted from training and support following the previous inspection. This has ensured that middle leaders are now confident and effective in their roles. They are clearly leading their areas of responsibility and are increasingly effective in checking the impact their work is having across the school. Middle leaders now share ideas and discuss their work in order to refine their plans for improvement. In short they are a team who support and challenge each other. Tangible improvements can be linked to the work of middle leaders, for example, the

significant improvement in pupils' phonic knowledge, the improving quality of writing across the school and the new computing curriculum. Middle leaders are beginning to challenge their peers. For example, they ensure that staff have the required subject knowledge for the new computing curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes to learning and classroom behaviour has improved significantly. Pupils are now very focused and engaged in their learning. Pupils say that this is because of better and more regular feedback which is helping them improve their learning. They also speak very articulately about the change in support they receive in their learning. One pupil commented, 'Teaching assistants used to only work with one group, now they will prompt any of us during a lesson – this helps keep me on my toes!'

The review of pupil premium funding has helped to identify systemic failures in the school's long standing assessment system. This has been completely overhauled and as a result leaders now have reliable information about the attainment and progress of pupils. Leaders are able to target interventions and support for maximum impact. They are now clear about the impact of the work being undertaken in school. Pupil premium children are making better progress, but as with many pupils across the school they need to make accelerated progress over time to ensure they achieve their full potential.

Leaders have a clear and ambitious action plan which shows a firm understanding of the priorities and improvement required. Some refinement of the plan is required to ensure that leaders and governors can accurately measure the impact of their work. This is essential so that it is clear if the plan is fully on track at any particular point in time. The plan does not currently identify attendance as an improvement priority. Overall attendance was slightly below the national average in 2014 and is likely to be so again this academic year. Currently, leaders do not analyse patterns in attendance rigorously enough. As a result they are unable to identify any potential impact on the achievement of groups of pupils. Leaders accept that this is necessary to be as accurate as possible in the targeting of support and intervention for pupils.

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 school is benefiting from increased support from the local authority. This has included governor training and making appropriate arrangements for the external review of pupil premium funding, support for phonics, writing and mathematics. The local authority is helpfully tracking the school's progress in addressing the areas identified for improvement and providing focused challenge to leaders and governors. Local authority advisers have helped to broker support from a Teaching School and National Leader of Education.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Southwark and as below.

Yours sincerely

David Storrie
Her Majesty's Inspector