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Mrs Penny Brown
Executive headteacher
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Dear Mrs Brown

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Reigate Park Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 14 October 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 December 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 December 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 last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the head of school, subject leaders and the joint chairs of the governing body. I also met with a representative of the local authority. I discussed the actions taken since the last inspection. I toured the school with you, spoke with pupils about their work, and scrutinised their books. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I also scrutinised school documentation relating to attainment and progress. The single central record was checked.

Context

Since the last inspection, the substantive headteacher resigned (from April 2016). An executive headteacher was identified to support the school. A head of school was appointed after Easter 2016. A collaborative relationship was formed between Reigate Park Primary, Ash Croft Primary and Cottons Farm Primary in April 2016. Two further assistant headteachers have been appointed from September 2016. The hearing impaired unit manager retired in April 2016. The special educational needs leaders took over the management of the unit. Three teachers resigned in July 2016. Three new teachers have been appointed. Currently, a temporary school business manager is in post. The school has appointed six new teaching assistants. An attendance officer has been appointed. The chair of the governing body resigned and the role of chair is now shared between two governors.

Main findings

You and the head of school make a dynamic and highly effective team. Since your appointments, you have both raised the expectations of the whole school team. As a team, you are ambitious for your pupils and refuse to accept second best. You have successfully communicated this vision to all your staff.

You have acted decisively to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Your plans for improvement focus precisely on what needs to be done to raise standards in mathematics, reading and writing. You have identified key staff to support you in this. The new middle leadership are a strong team. They are as focused and as determined as you to change the quality of teaching and learning. You have ensured that middle leaders feel empowered to take responsibility for improving outcomes for pupils. Middle leaders use their training to help them challenge and support their colleagues. This has resulted in better outcomes in learning. For example, the pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities have made good progress. These pupils learn alongside their peers because you have provided wider support through focused interventions to prepare them for learning at age-appropriate levels.

You have improved the quality of teaching through careful analysis of individual teachers' strengths and areas for development. You have utilised your leadership team to provide the necessary support, guidance and training to tackle weaknesses in teaching. You have raised teachers' expectations of what pupils need to learn so that they reach age-related expectations. You have set challenging targets for improvement. Careful coaching and clear expectations have provided teachers with better skills to tackle the learning needs of pupils. For example, in phonics the proportion of pupils in Year 1 reaching the expected standard has risen significantly this year to be in line with the unvalidated 2016 national average. Previously this proportion has been well below that of other pupils nationally. Outcomes for the rest of the school are also improving. School assessment information shows that the

proportions of pupils reaching age-related expectations are significantly higher than one year ago. This demonstrates accelerated progress. You have improved the challenge for your most able pupils. Attainment data for the end of Year 2 assessments shows that the proportions reaching the higher standard in mathematics, reading and writing are above the unvalidated national averages for 2016. However, attainment gaps remain for all pupils in key stage 2, particularly the most able pupils. They are not reaching their full potential in any subject. Unvalidated data for the end of Year 6 assessments shows that very few pupils reach the higher standards in mathematics, reading and writing.

Through focused work, pupils' attendance has improved considerably. You have been consistent in working with parents to solve attendance problems. The governing body has ensured that you have the support of an attendance officer to follow up concerns. Current data shows attendance above the national average for 2015.

The governing body has responded well to the challenge to improve its own work to support the school. In response to the external review, the joint chairs developed an action plan to seek training and support to address weaknesses in its practice. Governors have a much better understanding of their roles. Governors provide better challenge to school leaders through reviewing school assessment information and with external documents such as Ofsted's data dashboard. However, governors do not link their monitoring plans closely enough to the school improvement plan. As a result, they are not as effective as they could be.

Your school website now contains the information required by the Department for Education.

External support

Over the last three years, the leadership of Reigate Park Primary has changed three times. This has resulted in a period of disruption and uncertainty. The local authority acted decisively to support the school to secure consistent leadership. It identified the support of the executive headteacher and the head of school. It brokered their support firstly as a temporary measure and more recently as a substantive post for the head of school. This has had a significant impact in improving the quality of teaching and learning. The local authority has provided effective training for middle leaders to support colleagues to improve their work. This has resulted in improved outcomes for pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chairs of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Derby. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jan Connor
Her Majesty's Inspector