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Linda Corrall
The Bellbird Primary School
Link Road
Sawston
Cambridge
CB22 3GB

Dear Mrs Corrall

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Bellbird Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 28 January 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 September 2013. 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:

- extend the planned improvements to the curriculum to ensure the school is ready for the new National Curriculum requirements in September 2014.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you and other leaders, with pupils, five members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plans. I scrutinised other evidence that you are gathering of the impact of actions you have taken since the inspection. You and I visited lessons in all classrooms and focussed on the level of challenge in the work children were undertaking.

Main findings

The new deputy headteacher, who had only just joined the school when the inspection took place, has developed a clearer and more effective way of analysing and presenting data on the progress pupils are making. This is having an impact on the school's ability to evaluate its work and target resources and support where they are most needed.

In all the classrooms we visited, pupils were engaged in interesting and challenging work. Staff are benefitting from regular constructive feedback on their work. You discuss the evidence you gather from very regular visits to classrooms with individual teachers and share the key messages with all staff. The school supports teaching assistants very well to develop and improve their practice as part of the same system. Those seen during the visit were providing high quality support in classrooms.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. More able children reported that the work they are given is challenging and spoke very favourably about the new systems to help them improve their writing. The writing in pupils' books has improved in quantity and quality. Imaginative use of the atrium contributes well to developing pupils' creativity and you are making good use of pupils' views to ensure it continues to do so.

Governors have changed the structure of the committees so that all governors can gain a clearer understanding of all aspects of the school's work. They provide a high level of challenge for the school. They have extended the higher expectations to their own work, for example in the procedures for following up on actions noted in meetings.

The school had been improving steadily at the time of the last inspection and is continuing to do so. The whole school community is resolute in their determination to be not just good, but outstanding. Parental support for the school is very strong.

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 is providing appropriate support for this school, which they regard as able to sustain its own improvement. Nevertheless, practical support has been fundamental in ensuring the improvements can continue, for example, problems with computer systems have been resolved. The school makes good use of the authority's services including those relating to child protection and benefits from attending cluster meetings with other schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector