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Matthew Kleiner-Mann
Executive Headteacher
Brimsdown Primary School
Green Street
Enfield
EN3 7NA

Dear Mr Kleiner-Mann

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Brimsdown Primary School

Following my visit to your school with Lynton Karmock-Golds HMI on 25 March 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 and the associate headteacher gave us and for the time you both made available to discuss the actions being taken to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement for the second time following the section 5 inspection in May 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:

- make clear the summary headlines in monitoring documents so that the progress being made by pupils is communicated clearly and to aid analysis at all levels.
- focus on the achievement of more able pupils to ensure this group make stronger progress
- maintain the support of the local leader of governance for the governing body throughout the current reconstitution in order to develop more effective strategic leadership.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the associate headteacher, senior leaders including the literacy and numeracy coordinators and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader. In addition, I met the Chair of Governors and another governor along with the local leader of governance who is supporting the governing body. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority. I toured the school with the associate headteacher visiting a number of classes and reviewing the learning activities; the work in a sample of pupils' books was evaluated. A range of school documentation was scrutinised including the improvement plan and data on pupils' progress.

Context

Since my last monitoring inspection in September 2014 the previous headteacher and two teachers have left the school; a further three teachers are leaving at the end of this term. A new Chair of the Governing Body has been elected. The governors have entered into a collaborative arrangement with another school in the local authority for a period of three years. You have been appointed to the post of executive headteacher across both schools. The associate headteacher has been appointed to the role of operational leader at the school. These posts are also for three years. The senior and middle leadership of the school has been restructured. The governors have formed a rapid recovery group to lead the drive for improvement which meets each month and reports to the full governing body. An extra class has been formed within Year 6 and maths is taught in ability groups for this year group. Saturday schools take place for the oldest pupils and an Easter school is planned.

Main findings

Since your appointment and that of the associate headteacher it is clear that there has been a strong drive to improve the progress and attainment of the pupils. This has focused on the urgent need to improve the quality of teaching. There are now clear systems in place to monitor progress for all pupils, the quality of teaching and to hold teachers to account for the achievement of pupils.

The structure of learning reviews, pupil progress meetings and moderation of work in pupils' books has produced a comprehensive range of data and management information. This is beginning to be used effectively to develop sharply focused and time-bound interventions where underachievement is detected. The progress data for pupils across the school is analysed in great detail and shared widely across the school, including with the governing body. The comprehensive data produced has the strengths and weaknesses noted but this is not sufficiently accessible to aid improvement actions at both strategic and operational levels. Data show that pupils who are entitled to the pupil premium are making stronger progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The attainment gap between this group and other pupils at the school is beginning to close. This reflects the strong focus by leaders on the progress made by pupils entitled to the pupil premium following the last section 5

inspection. However, more able pupils do not yet show such clear progress in their achievement and this is a priority for action.

The school has developed a clear marking policy which is understood by staff and pupils. Children are encouraged to review their own work and respond to the guidance in marking by teachers. However, school monitoring and inspection evidence is consistent in showing that the quality of tasks for pupils following the marking of their work can be too variable in quality.

There has been effective work on improving the behaviour of pupils, particularly attitudes for learning. The work of the nurture class has been restructured to focus on younger pupils in order to support their emotional and social development. Pupils have played a full part in the development of the five key values which play an increasingly important part in the community life of the school. School rules are simple and pupils understand the sanctions for poor behaviour. Good behaviour is celebrated appropriately. The 'soft start' to each school day whereby pupils can enter classes as they arrive, settle to planned activities and eat breakfast if they wish has ensured a calmer start to lessons and improved punctuality.

Members of the governing body have responded well to the urgent need for improvement outlined at the last monitoring inspection. This is seen through the creation of the rapid recovery group which comprises a small number of governors, senior leaders and a local authority officer who meet each month to review the progress made across a range of improvement activities. The school improvement plan has specific prompts for governors to focus on developing professional challenge and holding leaders to account. Governors find these very useful.

The local leader of governance has provided effective support and challenge to the governing body since she was appointed. She gives clear advice on the planned reconstitution and a range of management structures. This, together with the governors' commitment to further improvement, is leading to more effective strategic leadership of the school. The external review of the school's use of the pupil premium has been completed and the resulting recommendations have been incorporated in the improvement plan.

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 provided effective support and challenge to the school. Local authority officers have been instrumental in brokering the collaboration between the schools and the appointment of the executive headteacher, associate headteacher and local leader of governance. This support and challenge is also shown through the inclusion of a member of the advisory staff in the governors' rapid recovery group. Local authority staff have conducted a full review of leadership and

management and teaching and learning. This has provided a useful evaluation of the school's progress.

The other school in the collaboration has worked effectively with Brimsdown staff including the moderation of work and the leadership of key stages.

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

Yours sincerely

Robert Pyner
Her Majesty's Inspector