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Mr John Tomlinson
Acting Headteacher
Wellfield Junior School
Dumber Lane
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Cheshire
M33 5QX

Dear Mr Tomlinson

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Wellfield Junior School.

Following my visit to your school on 25 January 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in October 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the acting headteacher, representatives from the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

Since the last inspection, the deputy headteacher is working as the acting headteacher in the absence of the headteacher.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The acting headteacher, in consultation with senior leaders, the governing body and the local authority, has written an improvement plan which is focused on the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The plan identifies clear priorities,

actions and success criteria. While monitoring and evaluation procedures are identified, there is scope for the school to tweak the plan to link the governing body more clearly to judging the school's successes.

The school has developed links with a local outstanding school and a local leader of education. This is providing valuable support to Wellfield Juniors. Most teachers and teaching assistants have observed good practice in local schools. Assessment procedures have been developed and are becoming increasingly accurate. The ways in which this data are used continue to improve. As a result, teaching assistants are now deployed where they are most needed to provide support to pupils who are falling behind with their learning. Checks made on the quality of teaching and learning show that inconsistencies remain across lessons, the marking of pupils' work and teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. The ways in which the school checks on the work of the teachers are developing and the acting headteacher acknowledges a more robust monitoring and evaluation cycle is needed. The majority of monitoring is carried out by the acting headteacher. However, plans are in place to develop the role of subject leaders, so they can have greater responsibility for improving their subject areas.

The governing body is committed to supporting the school. Governors have received training by the local authority on the use of data. They are keen to develop their skills and are organising an external review of the governing body to ensure their future effectiveness. At the present time, too little information is shared with the governing body. For example, pupils' termly assessments are not shared with governors. As a result, governors are not able to hold the school to account enough. The local authority has produced a statement of action which outlines how it will support school improvement. However, this statement is not fit for purpose, as the proposed actions do not focus on the areas for improvement from the last section 5 report, nor does it focus on how the actions will lead to improvement in pupils' outcomes.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is not fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Corporate Director of Children & Young People's Services for Trafford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward
Her Majesty's Inspector