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27 November 2012

Miss J Bowen  
Acting Headteacher  
Greenside Primary School and Children's Centre  
Greenside Lane  
Droylsden  
Manchester  
M43 7RA

Dear Miss Bowen

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Greenside Primary School and Children's Centre**

Following my visit to your school on 27 November, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. 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 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, the leads for mathematics at Key Stage 2 and for literacy at Key Stage 1, the Chair and two members of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. The school development plan was evaluated as well as data regarding pupils' progress, position statements on teaching and learning, mathematics, reading and special educational needs, and a recent report from the School Improvement Partner.

**Context**

There have not been any changes in staffing since the inspection in September. Five new governors, including two parent governors, have been appointed.

## **Main findings**

The findings of the inspection in September confirmed the school's self-evaluation of key areas for improvement. The three priorities in the school development plan take into account the aspects identified for further improvement in the inspection report. However, success criteria and timescales for completion are too general. Nevertheless, expectations and planned actions are clear. Governors and senior leaders are aware of the urgency needed and some actions have been brought forward, such as the introduction of a commercial scheme to support reading and writing at Key Stage 1. The school has made a strong start in implementing its plans.

Action has been taken in relation to each of the seven aspects identified in the inspection in September. So far, much has been done to establish procedures, to gain information from visits to good schools locally and to develop skills and knowledge through training in-house and from external sources. This approach has set clear expectations for classroom practice. It has also prompted ideas and increased the focus on practical problem-solving in mathematics and links between reading and writing. There are some signs that action is leading to greater consistency in classroom practice; for example, all classrooms have working walls in mathematics and literacy and there are some good examples of pupils' work in tackling challenging problems in mathematics. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the environment lacks some of the flair and ideas apparent in other parts of the school to catch pupils' interest in mathematics and reading.

The acting headteacher is giving a strong lead; senior leaders are working together to drive improvement, particularly in strengthening the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers have a clear overview of their strengths and areas to improve and programmes of support, coaching, team teaching and tailored professional development have been agreed. With support from the local teaching school alliance, staff are reflecting on their practice and sharing ideas. Others are involved in programmes to develop leadership skills or specialist knowledge, as in mathematics. The school has appointed a specialist teacher to deliver the Every Child Counts programme (to support the development of number) and teaching assistants are also receiving training linked to the support and intervention programmes they deliver. Evidence shows that some Year 6 pupils have made more than a year's progress in reading in the two months they have been following a programme of support.

There is a commitment to improvement from all staff. Staff accept their accountability for pupils' progress; sharper individual targets in performance management are linked to the progress of all pupils and to the new Teachers' Standards. The introduction of half termly reviews of pupils' progress is enabling staff to identify concerns early and to target support. Teachers and leaders are now aware of how different groups of pupils are faring and those who are not making enough progress. However, the identified groups do not include pupils from differing minority ethnic groups or those who speak English as an additional language.

Governors are aware of the areas for improvement and the links between teaching and pupils' progress. They have supported the acting headteacher in ensuring that the school has the staffing needed, such as a reading manager and additional teaching assistants, as well as the resources, to carry out the development plan. They are also keeping a close eye on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- specify, for each priority in the improvement plan, success criteria linked to milestones
- ensure that all groups of pupils in the school are identified in the analysis and comparison of data regarding pupils' progress
- provide opportunities for staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage to see outstanding practice in the development of early mathematics and reading so as to identify key aspects that may add to the quality of their provision
- use information from assessments taken in guided reading sessions to identify the specific skills that pupils either lack or find hard to apply.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority is in regular contact with the acting headteacher, has facilitated contacts with other schools and supported professional development initiatives. The School Improvement Partner has compiled a recent overview of the school's situation and identified some points for discussion, particularly in relation to teaching and learning. The school is investing in external consultancy in mathematics to provide specialist knowledge, coaching and support. It is too soon to evaluate the impact on the quality of teaching in mathematics or on pupils' progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Sonja Øyen  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**