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23 November 2012

Miss V Birchall
Headteacher
Newton Westpark Primary School
Tennyson Avenue
Leigh
Lancashire
WN7 5JY

Dear Miss Birchall

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Newton Westpark Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 22 November 2012, 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 headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and a group of pupils. Additionally, a telephone discussion was held with a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated and documents such as the minutes of the governing body, an external consultant's analysis of data and school action plans were scrutinised.

Context

Since the last inspection the governing body has, with the support of the local authority, co-opted two additional members with significant experience of education and governance. A new Chair of the Governing Body has been elected.

Main findings

Prompt and timely actions have been taken to increase the experience and skills of the governing body. The Chair of the Governing Body is about to commence training with the National College. Training for all governors to increase their skills in analysing data is also planned, utilising school staff expertise and local authority guidance.

The headteacher has completed a rigorous review of the school development plan which has been shared with the governing body. The plan is much improved showing clear priorities matched to the outcomes and areas for improvement identified in the September inspection. For example, staff training opportunities on the teaching of writing have been identified which link to the whole school priorities. Also, targets for pupils' progress are included, which are aimed at raising overall teacher expectations. However, the targets do not include sufficient ambition with regard to higher achieving pupils. Pupils say that the teaching of handwriting is now regular and more consistent.

The monitoring of teaching is more systematic and links better to the targets set for each individual staff member. Senior leaders are developing the monitoring systems for judging the quality of teaching. These include suitable mentoring for Newly Qualified Teachers.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take 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:

- provide training for the governing body so that they increase their skills in analysing data about pupils' progress
- increase the expectations for those pupils who ought to make more than average progress.

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

External support

The local authority has successfully arranged two additional members for the governing body. Both members are very experienced in education and governance. Additionally, the local authority has arranged that the school's leaders are supported by a National Leader of Education. The local authority plans to monitor the school's improvement through regular meetings to be held each term. A package of support through a local school's consortia is also planned to provide teachers with opportunities to learn about the best practice with regard to pupils' writing. It is too soon to measure the impact of external support on pupils' progress and attainment.

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

Yours sincerely

John Coleman
Her Majesty's Inspector