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4 December 2012

Mrs Hazel Winter

Stockingate Mill Junior School
Stockingate
South Kirkby
Pontefract
West Yorkshire
WF9 3DP

Dear Mrs Winter

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Stockingate Mill Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 3 December 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 October 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. School action plans were evaluated and documents recording performance management objectives and the outcomes of monitoring activities were examined.

Context

There have been no significant changes since the October inspection.

Main findings

School leaders have begun to tackle the weaknesses in their analysis and use of data. A new assessment co-ordinator has identified pupil underachievement more rigorously. A revised system of meetings to analyse pupil progress has been introduced which has begun to provide a clearer analysis for staff. Plans are in place to increase staff accountability for the progress made by pupils. The headteacher's performance objectives have been revised and are linked to measures of pupil progress. However, teachers' performance management objectives have not been revised.

The recent data analysis led to changes in the targeting of pupils needing extra help. The school has begun to experiment with grouping pupils by ability in mathematics in order to match teaching more closely to pupils' needs. The school has introduced a new scheme of work in mathematics to identify gaps in pupils' understanding and to review and improve the teaching in mathematics. Plans to improve English are being further developed with the support of an external adviser.

Governors have not received a sufficiently robust or prompt analysis of recent pupil performance. They are not due to receive a detailed analysis of the 2012 outcomes until next February. Governors do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of the weaknesses in teaching and achievement. Revisions to the school improvement plan provide milestones for governors to hold leaders to account more quickly. The improvement plan sets out appropriate actions for tackling the issues identified in the recent inspection. However, targets have not been updated to take account of recent increases in national averages.

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:

- develop governors' understanding of data and their capacity to challenge school leaders by holding an external review of governance
- strengthen the management of teachers' performance by introducing quantifiable objectives for pupil progress.
- strengthen professional development by enabling staff to learn from a school where improved teaching and assessment led to good progress in English and mathematics.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection and will visit the school again in the summer term 2013.

External support

An adviser from the local authority has recently started to work with the school and is providing effective support for leadership. Her evaluation has helped leaders to

identify and begin to implement actions that may lead to improvement. Her expertise has provided leaders and other staff with clearer challenge and direction. At present, teachers do not have opportunities to observe and discuss models of good practice in English and mathematics in another school.

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

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell

Her Majesty's Inspector