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18 December 2012

Ian Brierly
Headteacher
Chilwell School
Queen's Road West
Chilwell
Nottingham
NG9 5AL

Dear Mr Brierly

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Chilwell School

Following my visit to your school on 17 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, other senior and subject leaders, the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and groups of students. The school improvement action plan was evaluated. Responses from parents to the headteacher's questionnaire sent prior to the visit and recent additions to Parentview were considered. The headteacher and I conducted a scrutiny of the quality of marking during a tour of classrooms.

Context

There have been no significant changes to the staffing or organisation of the school since the inspection.

Main findings

Senior leaders have responded promptly and decisively to the outcomes of the inspection. A supplementary action plan has been drawn up which clearly identifies the strategies required to move the school to being good. The plan has several strengths, including interim milestones and how progress will be monitored. It lacks clarity on the order in which issues will need to be tackled. Governors are linked to the monitoring of the plan but would benefit from clearer identification of how they should fulfil their role.

Systems for collecting and sharing data on the progress students are making have been improved and leaders are using these to hold people to account. Monitoring activities are more regular and are leading to greater consistency in the application of policies such as that on marking. Students in the sixth form reported that teachers are giving them more regular opportunities to work independently. Subject leaders meet regularly to share good practice in order to improve consistency across different areas of the curriculum.

Governors are adapting to their more challenging role and have formed a small sub-committee specifically to address the issues from the inspection. Additional training has been organised and they are actively working to improve systems for gathering first hand evidence of the work of the school.

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:

- strengthen improvement planning by prioritising the actions to address the barriers to being good and identifying how governors will monitor progress
- support the growing capacity of subject leaders to assure the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility by establishing key dates for monitoring activities and through joint working with HMI on lesson observation
- develop governors' ability to collect and interpret first hand evidence on the quality of the work of the school through training and support from HMI.

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

External support

The local authority is supporting the school well through detailed reviews such as that of science and by brokering partnership working with successful schools in the area.

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

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector