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Miss Stephanie Grimshaw
Headteacher
Accrington Spring Hill Community Primary School
Exchange Street
Accrington
Lancashire
BB5 0JD

Dear Miss Grimshaw

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Accrington Spring Hill Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 14 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 and deputy headteacher, middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated, and a range of documentation was reviewed, including the reports to governors, data regarding pupils predicted achievement and information about teachers' performance management. The headteacher took Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) on a tour of the school to look at teaching and learning and the changes in staffing since the inspection.

Context

Since the inspection the school has appointed a deputy head teacher and a Key Stage 1 leader who will start in January. In addition a new Year 1 teacher will start in January and the school has appointed a permanent Year 3 teacher who will begin after Easter. A new Chair of the Governing Body will take over in the New Year.

Main findings

The school accepts that the outcomes and priorities from the recent inspection are the right ones, and has drawn up suitable plans to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The school improvement plan contains milestones for improvement for all year groups and middle leaders have written actions plans for their subjects. However, the criteria to enable leaders and governors to measure how much progress is being made need sharpening.

Governors have discussed the improvement plans and have accessed training provided by the local authority. Activities are underway to check teachers' planning and pupils' work and these are timetabled by leaders. Senior leaders are regularly checking the work of staff, however, they acknowledge there is more to do to make sure issues identified through monitoring are followed up to bring about the desired improvement.

As part of their performance management all teachers have individual targets that directly relate to accelerating pupils' progress and improving the quality of teaching. The headteacher has a clear view of what needs to be improved and has begun a process of introducing individual action plans as part of teachers' performance management.

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 recommends that further action is taken to:

- sharpen the criteria by which success is measured in the school's improvement plan and subject leaders' action plans to enable leaders and governors to measure and evaluate the impact of agreed actions
- ensure that monitoring activity focuses on following up identified issues to ensure required improvements are brought about with sufficient urgency.

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

External support

The local authority advisor and the headteacher have worked in partnership to coordinate a range of useful support for staff and to draft the schools' development plan. A literacy consultant has already begun work with the school and further support from teaching and learning consultants is planned.

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

Yours sincerely

Adrian Guy

Her Majesty's Inspector