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25 March 2013

Mrs Sharon Joyce
Headteacher
Swinton Queen Primary School
Queen Street
Swinton
Mexborough
South Yorkshire
S64 8NE

Dear Mrs Joyce

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

Following my visit to your school on 25 March 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 second 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, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The inspector observed the school's work and analysed a range of management documents, including those relating to school self-evaluation, pupils' achievement and the improvement of teaching.

Context

No significant change has occurred since the inspection.

Main findings

The pace of improvement has accelerated since the first monitoring inspection. This is because senior leaders have adopted a more rigorous and systematic approach to monitoring and improving the quality of teaching. Short lesson observations focus on one aspect of teaching at a time with particular attention paid to the impact on pupils' progress. Teachers receive constructive feedback and a good range of training opportunities which are closely

matched to their individual needs. As a result, there is more effective teaching across the school. This is particularly seen in the teaching of writing which was highlighted as an area for improvement in the inspection of October 2012. Some teachers still show uncertainty in how to assess pupils' progress during lessons and adapt their teaching accordingly, although senior leaders have appropriate plans in place to tackle this.

Teachers are motivated by seeing how much their improved lessons are leading to better outcomes for pupils and therefore are more committed to working as a team to improve the school as rapidly as possible. Senior leaders are more precise in their evaluation of the school's work, which contributes to staff and governors being clearer about what is still needed to secure good achievement for pupils. Their evaluation is strengthened by a much improved process for recording and analysing each pupil's progress. These records show that, since January 2013, there has been a marked reduction in the number of pupils who do not make enough progress.

The Governing Body has a much clearer understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because they receive more detailed and accurate information from the headteacher and other school leaders. Therefore, they spend more of their time reviewing the work of the school and ensuring that effective measures are being put in place to improve pupils' achievement.

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:

- Ensure that all teachers are equally skilful in checking pupils' progress during lessons and immediately increasing support or challenge where necessary.

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

External support

The local authority provides effective guidance to school leaders and governors. Their systematic monitoring of the school's work shows that this guidance is used well to improve leadership and teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford

Her Majesty's Inspector