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27 March 2013

Mrs Colleen Jackson
Executive Headteacher
Sandal Primary School
West Lane
Baildon
ShIPLEY
West Yorkshire
BD17 5DH

Dear Mrs Jackson

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Sandal Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 26 March 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the headteacher, and other senior leaders. Her Majesty's Inspector also held meetings with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's raising achievement plan was evaluated.

Context

Since the inspection one teacher has been on long-term absence and this class is being covered by a temporary teacher. The headteacher is retiring at Easter and an executive headteacher is working with the school in the interim until a substantive headteacher can be appointed. During this time the deputy headteacher will become the head of school and governors have agreed the temporary appointment of acting senior leaders and an additional teaching and learning responsibility post.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Governors and senior leaders accept the judgements of the inspection and, with the local authority, have taken prompt action to begin to address the issues raised. They have brokered a partnership with another successful local school and have secured the expertise of an executive headteacher. This link with a partner school has enabled all teachers to be 'buddied' with a teacher from the link school and this has resulted in reciprocal visits and training for teachers and leaders about how to improve planning and the use of assessment. The school has reviewed the timetable and created extra time for teaching.

The local authority has reviewed the quality of teaching and learning at the school and has given clear information to leaders and governors about relative strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers. Leaders and governors have reviewed the framework for the appraisal and management of teachers' performance. This means that teachers' performance will be formally reviewed in the summer term and a new cycle of appraisals will commence.

Leaders and governors have drafted a raising achievement plan to address the issues raised by the inspection and this contains appropriate actions to bring about improvements. However, the criteria and milestones in these plans need to be more precise to enable leaders and governors to measure improvement towards their targets.

With the support of the local authority, the governing body are undertaking an audit of their skills and knowledge. They have established a school improvement committee and are meeting regularly with the local authority in a School Specific Monitoring Group in order to check on the progress of the school.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Bradford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Guy

Her Majesty's Inspector