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29 April 2013

Miss Georgina Haley
Headteacher
Sitlington Netherton Junior and Infant School
Netherton Lane
Netherton
Wakefield
West Yorkshire
WF4 4HQ

Dear Miss Haley

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Sitlington Netherton Junior and Infant School, Wakefield

Following my visit to your school on 26 April 2013, 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 January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the acting headteacher and acting deputy, the Maths and Literacy leads, a group of pupils, governors and a representative of the local authority. The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation including: the school's post-Ofsted development plan, pupil' progress tracking information, school self-evaluation, lesson observations, information about performance management and pupils' work. In addition, the acting headteacher and inspector undertook a learning walk to look at provision and the quality of teaching and learning.

Context

Since the last inspection, the school has increased the hours and responsibility of an experienced Y6 teacher who has been on a supply contract since October. An acting- deputy has been appointed from within the school. There has been an increase in the number of pupils on roll.

Main findings

The school's post-Ofsted development plan follows closely the areas for improvement identified in the inspection in January. It gives a precise account of intended actions, with clear milestones and measurable outcomes. The School's Self Evaluation is succinct and makes clear what needs to be done.

As a result of the actions agreed and undertaken, there have already been some tangible improvements in a short space of time.

Since February, an acting deputy has taken on a number of responsibilities to allow the acting headteacher to work more strategically.

The Year 6 cohort are making good progress towards ambitious end of year targets and are set to exceed expectations in Reading and Maths and meet expectations in writing. The school has yet to evidence the impact of developments in teaching and learning in Maths for pupils in Years 3-5 and in writing throughout school.

Staff meeting time is being used to help staff learn, develop and grow together. As a result, there is already greater consistency in planning and in the marking of pupils' work and feedback. The introduction of personalised targets is helping pupils to better understand what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. They say that marking tells them, 'What we have done well and what to do next'. They confirm that they have to check what is written in their books and they are given time to look back at their work and correct it. Progress is evident in their work and pupils are motivated to do well.

Teachers are now being held to account for pupil progress and have analysed the latest assessment data at individual pupil level for their class. This enables teachers to help pupils make progress. As a result of this the school is now able to identify any underperforming groups of pupils. In addition, the senior leadership team have made adjustments to staffing and school organisation to support these improvements. They are confident that progress will be accelerated as a result.

Some staff are working with other schools to strengthen their confidence in understanding the levels pupils are working at, this needs to be extended to provide the same opportunity to all staff.

The plan has begun to address the role of subject leads in the short term and a clear plan is in place for September. Teachers are keen to take on these roles. The Maths lead, who is due to return from maternity leave in June, is already involved with developments and training.

The school has worked hard to develop and populate a new website. It now contains some key information and is a useful source of information.

Senior leaders, governors and the Local Authority 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 the accuracy of assessments by providing opportunities for all staff to moderate pupils' work with partner schools.
- Check the accuracy of teacher assessment by sampling some pupils' work against the level achieved in assessments
- Secure accelerated progress by ensuring that the lesson format and grouping of pupils is adapted daily, based on the outcomes of the previous lesson, to maximise learning for all pupils
- Ensure that the local authority supports the acting headteacher in securing the right appointment for a teacher in KS2
- Analyse summer term data to identify trends in performance for groups of pupils to inform school development planning and to target pupil premium spending effectively.

Since the last inspection, the school has highlighted phonics as an area for development in terms of planning, delivery and assessment. The acting deputy headteacher is leading the development of this, has written a phonics action plan and is leading good practice in this area with KS1 staff.

The school has agreed to share its summer term data with the HMI to demonstrate the progress made and to discuss future actions as a consequence of this.

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

External support

The support of the headteacher at Lawefield Primary School is proving invaluable support to sustain the change required and drive forward the improvements needed. The local authority is providing an excellent level of support and challenge to the school, co-ordinated by the school improvement adviser. He has identified and arranged appropriate, and timely, training for the acting headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body. The Governing Body continue to provide effective support and challenge and they value the level of honesty and openness from the acting headteacher.

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

Anne Bowyer

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Mr Keith Worall -Local authority School Improvement Adviser
- Mrs Helen Storey- Senior HMI North East, York and Humber