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Lynn Asquith
The headteacher
The Meadows Community School
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Dear Ms Asquith

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to The Meadows Community School

Following my visit to your school on 02 May 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 headteacher, deputy headteacher, three representatives from the governing body, the local authority adviser and a group of Year 9 students. The school improvement plan was evaluated. A range of documentation was reviewed including progress and attendance data, and records of lesson observation and line management meetings.

Context

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are retiring at the end of the summer term. Plans are advanced to appoint an executive and associate headteacher.

Main findings

The school improvement plan has been revised to capture priorities from the last inspection. It is not always clear what difference the actions identified will have on students' attainment and progress because success criteria are not measurable. Details on how progress will be monitored and evaluated are not specified, or how progress will be reported to governors.

Since the inspection leaders have made improvements to some aspects of monitoring. Teachers are receiving more detailed feedback from lesson observations and the scrutiny of work. Meetings between senior leaders and curriculum leaders are now structured and focus on progress and evidence from monitoring. Teachers' expectations in all subjects have been raised through tracking sheets that encourage greater ambition in what students can achieve. Teachers' have responded positively to a new marking policy to strengthen feedback to students. Discussions with students indicate that they are not aware of the school's vision and ambitions for the school.

The governing body has made notable progress in a short period. The introduction of progress meetings to scrutinise performance data is already making a difference. Questions are raised so that responses can be shared with all governors to strengthen their understanding the school's performance. Governors do not receive information on teaching quality, or the impact of improvement activities.

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 recommend that further action is taken to:

- make sure that the improvement plan has measurable success criteria to check on progress, supported by details about how progress will be monitored, evaluated and reported to the governing body
- ensure that the governing body receives regular information about the quality of teaching, and the impact of actions to support improvement
- share with students the actions being taken to bring about rapid improvement in teaching and learning, and how they can contribute to this process.

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

External support

The governing body responded positively to the external review of governance. Greater clarity in the governor role is evident in the questions raised in meetings, and the shared sense of urgency to move the school forward. Additional training is planned to strengthen the impact of the governing body further. The local authority is providing effective support in managing the transition in the school's senior leadership. Local authority consultants are working with targeted teachers to support

improvement, and to strengthen middle leadership. Links with an outstanding school have been agreed to accelerate the school's improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Nada Trikić
Her Majesty's Inspector