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8 May 2013

Ms Kay Sherburn
Headteacher
Roughwood Primary School
Roughwood Road
Rotherham
South Yorkshire
S61 3HL

Dear Ms Sherburn

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Roughwood Primary School, Rotherham

Following my visit to your school on 7 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 February 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, middle leaders, the governing body and representatives of the local authority. The school improvement plans were evaluated and records of pupil progress were scrutinised.

Context

There have been no significant changes since the inspection in February.

Main findings

Since the inspection, school leaders have focussed more sharply on what they need to do become good. Whole school plans have well-defined actions and quantitative success criteria. These are helpfully supplemented by action plans for year groups, core subjects and attendance. Expectations have been raised by introducing targets for good instead of average progress at Key Stage 2. The headteacher has distributed data about progress and attainment to senior and middle leaders who have now included pupil progress measures in their plans. Middle leaders have begun to take more initiative in analysing and explaining the progress of pupils in review meetings. Weaknesses in pupil progress have started to be followed up more sharply by including agreed actions in teachers' planning and using

observations of teaching to monitor the progress of underachieving pupils. Recent analysis of the letters and sounds programme introduced this school year shows that pupils on this programme have made faster progress in reading and reduced the gap with other pupils.

Teacher improvement plans have been introduced for individual members of staff with more formal and precise objectives and shorter timescales for improving teaching. Plans are in place to extend this approach to teaching assistants. Teachers' planning and marking have begun to be scrutinised more regularly and consistently and senior leaders have started to provide staff with individual feedback. Leaders report that grouping of pupils by ability, introduced last September, appears to be helping teachers to match activities to pupils' needs more closely.

Governors have begun to improve their monitoring. A new and small school improvement committee has started to check the school's progress more regularly and to review the quality of teaching more objectively. Senior leaders have begun to report to governors more regularly about the progress of their action plans. More systematic plans for governors to monitor different year groups and subjects involve governors working in pairs. A more formal procedure for carrying out and recording governor visits has been introduced. The external review of governance is in the process of being arranged through the local national leader for governance.

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:

- sustain and develop the more precise and robust approach to improving and checking the quality of teaching
- carry out the external review of governance.

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

External support

A local headteacher has been supporting school improvement. Since the inspection, he has contributed to the development of the school plans and has identified opportunities to link staff with partner schools. The local authority expressed confidence in the leadership of the school and in the support provided by the local leader of education.

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

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell

Her Majesty's Inspector