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8 May 2013

Mrs Carolyn Thackway
Fleetwood Charles Saer Community Primary School
Grange Road
Fleetwood
Lancashire
FY7 8DD

Dear Mrs Thackway

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Following my visit to your school on 8 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 and your staff 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.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you, senior and middle leaders, two governors, including the Chair, and a local authority officer. I evaluated the updated school development plan. I scrutinised minutes of the Standards and Effectiveness Committee meetings; records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching; and pupils' progress information.

Context

Since the inspection you have all moved into the new building. This is not quite finished so that some classes are based in the library, hall and studio. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader (Nursery teacher) is on maternity leave and the job share teacher now covers this class full time. A Reception teacher is on long term sickness absence and a supply teacher covers this class.

Main findings

You, your leaders, governors and staff have a shared and clear understanding of what action you need to take to make sure the school becomes good. You have accepted the findings of the Section 5 inspection and have renewed vigour to bring about improvement. You and your staff are building on the work begun in the previous terms to accelerate progress in reading and mathematics while continuing the drive to improve writing. Leadership roles have been reviewed across the school so that expertise can be shared and support and guidance given where it is needed most.

Your school development plan already included many of the aspects identified by the Section 5 inspection and new plans were added; this has led to the creation of two plans. It would be beneficial for the school to rationalise these so that all involved can plot the progress of the school to good more efficiently. Planned action, roles, responsibilities and monitoring and evaluation strategies are detailed. Despite you and your senior leaders' ability to explain what pupils' achievement will be when the school is good, specific targets (milestones) linked to pupils' achievement are short term.

Action to improve the quality of teaching is your key priority this term. Through a self-evaluation process (including a teaching assistant videoing the start of each teacher's lesson) all teachers have been guided to an understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement. This has led to training in planning effective lessons for the different ability groups in each class; questioning techniques; activities to improve the pace of lessons; visits to other schools to see effective practice; and marking. From senior leaders' observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and analysis of pupil progress data, you can see that the quality of teaching is improving.

Information gathered in the spring term indicates that the short term milestone targets in teaching, and pupils' achievement in Year 2 and Year 6 are being met. Progress is analysed via pupil progress meetings. Together with senior leaders, teachers discuss the progress of every pupil in reading, writing and mathematics so that any gaps in achievement can be recognised and catch-up sessions implemented. As a result of this process senior leaders found specific gaps in mathematics' learning for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. Now teachers plan very exact steps so that pupils cover the precise concept in mathematics they need to make progress.

You have assumed a leadership role for the Early Years Foundation Stage. After staff in this phase received training from the local authority a new method for checking the children's learning has been introduced. Plans are in place for the future role, responsibility and training for the Early Years Foundation Stage leader but have not come to fruition due to staff absence.

Governors are resolute in their desire to improve pupils' achievement. They receive detailed information about developments in the school and are increasingly asking probing questions to hold leaders to account and to check on the success of new initiatives. Several governors are new to the role but have received training in their responsibilities. Governors reviewed the development plan and a specific governor is now linked to each section of the plan. The plan includes how reports will be submitted to governors by senior leaders but there is scope for the governors to identify how they can gather and collate evidence to support their role. The Standards and Effectiveness Committee, set up just prior to the Section 5 inspection, is developing its role in the monitoring and evaluation of the school.

You, your 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, I recommend that further action is taken to:

- assemble the original school development plan and the new plan to enable all involved to, more easily, plot progress of the school towards good
- set long and medium term targets (milestones) so that staff, governors and parents know exactly what to aim for to move the school to good.
- include in the development plan opportunities for governors to monitor and gather evidence of the school's progress
- explore the use of Ofsted publications, subject specific information and good practice examples to support training in school.

I will ensure that you are sent an invitation to attend an Ofsted seminar.

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

External support

The local authority has responded to the school's request for support in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this continues. The local authority officer has organised a link with an outstanding school and there are plans in place for another link with an emphasis on the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Training for new governors has been provided by the local authority and training is planned for middle leaders later this term.

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

Yours sincerely

Eileen Mulgrew
Her Majesty's Inspector