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Miss J Wragg
Stirling Primary School
Prospect Place
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN1 3QP

Dear Miss Wragg

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Stirling Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 4 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plans were evaluated along with other school documentation including records from lesson observations and the headteacher's report to the governing body.

Main findings

The headteacher and senior leaders have responded well to the task of making improvements following the last inspection. A post inspection action plan has been drawn up and actions are being taken. For example, staff training to improve is helping to improve the skills of teachers and this is beginning to improve the quality of teaching. The action plan includes all of the areas which were judged to require improvement and identifies clear success criteria. Although the proposed actions are

appropriate on some occasions there is confusion between actions to bring about improvement and what is in fact checking on their impact. Some arrangements for checking on the implementation of improvements are evident and a detailed programme of monitoring over the term drawn up. However, it is not always clear how each checking activity explicitly links to the planned improvements. Additionally, the role of governors in evaluating the impact of the actions being taken is not clear in relation to all of the areas for improvement. High pupil turnover continues to be a significant factor for the school to overcome in order to secure good achievement for all pupils. However, further work is needed in order to ensure the progress of pupils who join the school is tracked and analysed accurately. A promising sign is that attendance rates are rising but continue to be low.

Governors understand that there is room for improvement. The headteacher's termly report to the governing body has been enhanced to provide governors with a good level of detail related to the attainment and progress of pupils. However, there is scope to more clearly report on the areas identified as requiring improvement. A positive step was for the headteacher to provide governors with her report two weeks before the meeting and consequently governors posed challenging questions. A review of governance is underway and governors have already begun to respond to the emerging findings. Although governors know about the pupil premium they have not influenced its strategic use or evaluated its impact.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that there is clarity between what are developments and what are the arrangements for checking on the impact of improvements
- ensure that the planned programme of monitoring activities focuses sharply on gauging the impact of specific improvements
- ensure that governors are involved in the evaluations of the planned improvements.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority has provided appropriate support for the school since the last inspection. This has included guidance and support for leaders in preparing the post inspection action plans and training for senior leaders.

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

Yours sincerely

Amraz Ali
Her Majesty's Inspector