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Mrs Laura Cole
Headteacher
Hoylandswaine Primary School
Haigh Lane
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Sheffield
South Yorkshire
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Dear Mrs Cole

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hoylandswaine Primary School, Barnsley

Following my visit to your school on 10 September 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 June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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:

- Make sure that written evaluations of lessons identify the impact of teaching on learning and how the performance of teachers can be improved.
- Identify how teaching will be further improved and specifically how planned classroom activities will always be at the right level to challenge all groups of pupils.
- Clarify the role of governors in evaluating improvements, and identify what information and will be provided to governors, by who and when.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. All classrooms were visited and two lessons were sampled. The school improvement plans were evaluated along with other school documentation including records from lesson observations.

Context

Since the inspection in June 2013 there have been a small number of contextual changes. The acting headteacher was appointed as the permanent headteacher. Three teachers have changed the classes that they teach. There has been an increase in the school roll from 90 to 112 and the two infant classes now each have 30 pupils.

Main findings

The headteacher has begun to systematically tackle the issues requiring improvement. Consequently, a range of new routines and systems have been introduced including the regular assessment and tracking of pupils' levels of attainment. Termly pupil progress reviews are holding teachers to account for the progress of pupils and the setting of targets for each pupil has been introduced. There are early indications that as a consequence progress across the school is beginning to improve. A programme of staff development is in place and training, such as improving teachers' skills at assessment and planning, has begun to strengthen the quality of teaching. However, the headteacher and governors know that there remains much to do to secure good teaching in all classrooms. Although improvement plans are sound it is not clear how further improvements to teaching and learning will be systematically brought about, specifically in ensuring that tasks challenge all ability groups in all lessons.

The headteacher has an accurate understanding of the school's current strengths and areas requiring improvement. Although the quality of teaching is formally and informally evaluated, soundly written evaluations do not always identify specifically how teachers should improve their performance. There have been improvements to the role of governors. Following training and support from local authority officers they have a more secure understanding of their role in challenging and supporting the school and have sound plans in place to extend their role further. The information provided to governors in the headteacher's termly reports has been improved so that governors are provided with information about pupils' attainment and rates of progress across the school. Although governors are beginning to use this information to hold leaders to account their role in checking on the implementation of planned improvements is unclear. It is not always clear what information will be provided to governors, when or by whom.

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 and the local authority school effectiveness officer knows the school well. The local authority correctly identifies that the school remains in need of on-going support. Members of the school improvement service have delivered staff training and worked with individual teachers. School leaders are beginning to plan developments with a partner school, including a local leader in education, to provide specific support to individual teachers.

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

Yours sincerely

Amraz Ali

Her Majesty's Inspector