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Mr S Pringle
Headteacher
Brinsworth Manor Junior School
Brinsworth Lane
Brinsworth
Rotherham
South Yorkshire
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Dear Mr Pringle

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Brinsworth Manor Junior School, Rotherham

Following my visit to your school on 11 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. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking incisive and urgent action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. The school should take immediate action to:

- complete the development plan to include all of the areas for improvement identified by the Ofsted inspection in May 2013, in particular with regard to behaviour and leadership and management, and including measurable milestones
- produce a clear monitoring and evaluation timetable to include work and planning scrutiny, details of the peer scrutiny programme as well as timely formal lesson observations
- plan an appropriate and rigorous method for governors to hold the leadership team to account for the impact of the planned improvements.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan, development plan and other documents provided by the school were evaluated. The headteacher took HMI on a learning walk both during lessons and at lunchtime.

Context

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body are newly elected. There are three new teachers all of whom are newly qualified teachers.

Main findings

The leadership team have started to take action on the areas for improvement identified in the inspection. A clear short term action plan has helped to begin the improvement. The development plan responds to some areas for improvement but does not include actions for the improvement and monitoring of behaviour or leadership and management. The section on leadership and management has been delayed until the review of governance is underway which will identify the timeline for improvement. The plan has headline success criteria for the attainment of pupils and the percentage of outstanding teaching but lacks milestones which would help governors to monitor the impact of the actions taken. There is no formal process by which governors hold the leadership team to account for the impact of their actions to improve the school.

Staff have had training to help them improve their mathematics teaching, particularly with problem solving activities, and more training is planned. The impact of the training is yet to show consistency across the school. There is a plan to include problem solving activities in Friday's lessons.

The school has responded well to the area for improvement about behaviour and parental engagement. Staff have contributed to a new behaviour and rewards policy which has been communicated effectively to parents. Pupils understand it well and are excited by attaining stars for their good behaviour. Parents have made positive comments to leaders and governors about the new systems. No poor behaviour was seen in the classroom or at lunchtime on this visit. There is a separate plan for parental engagement led by a senior leader. A pilot afternoon for parents to share their children's learning was a success. The latest parent view has a small number of responses but the feedback is much more positive than in summer term 2013. Further actions to improve and to monitor improvements in this area should now be included in the development plan.

New marking and feedback and presentation policies have been produced in conjunction with the staff. The marking and feedback policy gives pupils 'ideas to think about' and they now need time in lessons to respond to this feedback so they can show they understand how to improve. Leaders commented that pupils are showing more pride in their handwriting and presentation. Pupils were not always able to say how to reach their target level even though some knew their targets. Book marks in exercise books with level descriptors for individual pupils were examples of good practice.

Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the actions is not clearly planned. The deputy headteacher has introduced a system of peer monitoring which shows evidence of teachers identifying next steps to improve their teaching and learning together with a leader. This has the potential to improve teaching and learning but it is at an early stage. The development plan refers to pupil interviews, planning reviews and work scrutiny however these are not included in the draft monitoring and evaluation timetable which needs to be made much more rigorous and formal. There is a clear calendar of monitoring and support for newly qualified teachers.

The school's detailed analysis of 2013 Key Stage 2 results shows outcomes have improved for mathematics. Attainment in writing is similar to 2012 results and to national. Outcomes in reading are below 2012 results and national figures. Pupil premium pupils outperformed their peers in writing and mathematics and were in line with them in reading. There are some very sensible recommendations following the results analysis which should be included in the development plan.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection. HMI will return to the school in November 2013 to carry out a further monitoring visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to review the improved development plan and ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to monitor the impact of improvements. HMI will meet with governors to discuss their monitoring and evaluation of the impact of improvements.

External support

The local authority has provided training and support for the development of mathematics. They have brokered the work of a local leader of education and a national leader of governance. The school has useful contacts with other outstanding schools, which are providing support for guided reading, and it is also part of the local learning community which is investigating good practice in writing and has an agreed calculations policy.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Lane

Her Majesty's Inspector