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15 November 2013

Sarah Moore
Acting headteacher
Langton Primary School
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Dear Ms Moore

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Langton Primary School, North Yorkshire

Following my visit with Christopher Keeler, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 14 November 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 September 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:

- secure arrangements for the continued, long-term leadership of the school
- ensure the acting headteacher has a significant presence within classrooms, working alongside staff to demonstrate what good teaching and learning looks like
- amend school improvement plans to focus on specific outcomes for pupils.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, a previous acting headteacher, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the English subject leader. I reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan and undertook a tour of the school.

Context

An acting headteacher was appointed in November 2013 to cover for the continued absence of the substantive headteacher. This is the fourth acting headteacher in the last seven months. A local authority governor has also been recently appointed to fill a vacancy on the governing body.

Main findings

Although you have only been in post a short time you have quickly identified what needs to be done in order to take the school forward. Improving the quality of teaching and learning and securing effective and stable leadership are priorities and these are reflected in the school improvement plan. Your effective liaison with previous leaders, together with regular monitoring by the governing body and the local authority, has kept disruption to a minimum. However, much still needs to be done because the leadership instability brought about by the long term absence of the substantive headteacher has restricted the pace of improvement.

Teachers are keen to develop their practice and welcome the training and support they now receive. As a result, they are becoming more confident in assessing pupils' work; have begun to use information about the progress pupils' make to adapt their teaching and show improved understanding about how pupils' writing skills develop. These improvements are the result of a package of 'non-negotiables', which clearly set out your expectations of planning, teaching, pupils' learning and behaviour management. This strategy is effectively raising staff awareness of what constitutes good practice. However, in order to ensure that the quality of teaching improves rapidly, it is essential that you have an increased presence in classrooms, supporting teachers and modelling best practice.

The governing body have completed an audit of their strengths and weaknesses and sought training to enable them to improve their skills. They are becoming better informed about the work of the school and, as a result, beginning to hold school leaders to account. The recently convened school improvement committee meets regularly with the headteacher to monitor progress of initiatives in the school improvement plan. While this plan covers all areas that need to be addressed with pertinent and timely actions, it lacks specific targets linked to improved outcomes for pupils. This makes it difficult for all leaders, but especially governors, to know precisely how well new initiatives are making a difference to the quality of teaching and the progress pupils' make.

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 effective support by helping to secure a leadership presence at the school since the previous inspection. Productive links are currently being forged with your own schools so that staff have opportunities to work alongside highly skilled classroom practitioners to help them develop their teaching skills.

You and the school's Chair of Governors agree that it would be beneficial to attend an Ofsted *getting to good* seminar over the next few months. This is in the process of being arranged.

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

Yours sincerely

Lee Owston

Her Majesty's Inspector