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29 November 2013

Mr Christopher Hoyle
Headteacher
Ridgewood School
Barnsley Road
Scawsby
Doncaster
DN5 7UB

Dear Mr Hoyle

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Ridgewood School, Doncaster

Following my visit to your school on 27 November 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 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:

- produce a document which clearly measures the effectiveness of all initiatives, support and actions undertaken throughout the school at all levels
- include differentiated milestones in the whole school action plan more frequently so that monitoring arrangements are clear and those responsible for evaluation, particularly governors, can understand if the school is going in the right direction
- make sure that lesson observations consider if teachers make appropriate use of the data provided for them so that lessons meet the needs of all students.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, senior and middle leaders, members of the Governing Body and a representative from Lilac Sky Schools Management and Education Services to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. Four members of the sixth form gave me a tour of the school. The school's response to the Ofsted inspection and other improvement plans and reports were evaluated.

Main findings

You and your colleagues have continued the work already in place prior to the inspection. A team approach by senior and middle leaders who meet regularly provides a secure mechanism for the quality of teaching throughout the school to be linked to the progress made by all students. Changes to the way data is captured, then presented to staff, is clear and enables subject leaders and pastoral staff to identify trends within and across subjects. At present, school data would suggest that not all teachers are making enough use of this information when they plan lessons. This is because progress made by some students in subjects is not good enough and more students are capable of reaching higher grades than at present.

Students who showed me around the school spoke enthusiastically about the benefits of the sixth form providing a clear path-way to advanced level examinations and further education. Despite better examination results in 2013 for students at the end of Year 11, you recognise that improving the quality of teaching and the progress made by all students is needed so that the school can improve rapidly. I will want to see that the range of initiatives and coaching programmes in place are having a sustained impact on all students and staff.

The governors who I met are very supportive of the school. They welcome the way data is now presented to them and are considering how links with parents should be strengthened. Some ideas were discussed and regular newsletters appear to be a positive way forward. Governors also understand the need to strengthen the action plans so they can measure clearly and not by anecdotal comments, whether the school is going forward successfully.

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

You have sought support from the Lilac Sky Schools Management and Education Services to improve the quality of teaching. To date this programme has been successful and is being adapted so that their next main focus is to support particular subject areas. In addition consultants are engaged to provide an external view of the school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector