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29 November 2013

Mrs Pat Boyle
Headteacher
Wigginton Primary School
Westfield Lane
Wigginton
York
North Yorkshire
YO32 2FZ

Dear Mrs Boyle

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Wigginton Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 27 and 28 November 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and findings of the inspection. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's most recent monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged as having serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in April 2013. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Executive Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for York.

Yours sincerely

Ian Richardson

Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in April 2013

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good in order to accelerate pupils' progress and help them attain the standards of which they are capable, especially in English and in Key Stage 2 by:
 - improving the teaching of reading, especially in Years 5 and 6
 - planning lessons that meet the needs of all pupils including boys and those pupils with disabilities or special educational needs
 - ensuring lessons motivate and challenge pupils effectively to help them learn at a brisk pace throughout the lesson, as well as developing their independence
 - improving teachers' questioning skills so that all pupils are encouraged to think more deeply about the learning they are making
 - improving the quality of teachers' marking so that pupils are told clearly what they need to do next to improve their work
 - ensuring teachers have high expectations of their pupils and encourage them to take greater pride in their work
 - raising teachers' expectations of pupils' literacy skills in subjects other than English.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the expertise of subject leaders so that they can contribute more effectively to improving teaching and pupils' progress
 - implementing a rigorous programme of checks and an analysis of pupils' progress so that school leaders are better able to understand how well pupils are doing and know whether actions to speed up progress have worked.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 11 and 28 November 2013

Evidence

The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. The inspector had meetings with the Executive Chair of Governing Body and three other governors and with two officers from the local authority. In addition, the inspector scrutinised current planning and other school documentation such as records of lesson observations. He also observed five lessons jointly with senior leaders and carried out two learning walks, one of which was done jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The focus of the second monitoring inspection was principally the quality of teaching and the systems in place for bringing about improvement.

Context

Since the last monitoring inspection, the new deputy headteacher joined the school in September and a new assistant headteacher was appointed from the staff. The school has also appointed two new subject leaders in literacy to lead improvement in this aspect of the school's work. There have been no other significant changes to staffing.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The new senior leadership team in the school have continued their efforts to bring about improvement in the school. They have been guided in their efforts by the strategic improvement plan they created in response to the Ofsted inspection report. They are rigorously monitoring improvements and the impact of their actions with reference to the improvement plan.

There is now a clear programme for monitoring teaching and learning. The frequency of lesson observations has increased to half-termly for all teachers. The consistency of lesson observations has been secured through joint observations with consultants and senior staff. In addition, work scrutinies are providing valuable monitoring data for judging progress made by pupils and they are providing the opportunity for feedback to individual teachers on performance. The frequency of work scrutiny is now fortnightly and the outcomes are communicated to staff effectively. At the next staff meeting, phase teams will evaluate and discuss examples of books from each class and identify good practice. The inspector observed a work scrutiny activity which was collaborative and thorough. Regular moderation also encourages the engagement of teachers with performance data. Feedback from teachers shows they recognise the value of these monitoring activities.

The school has worked on consistency and good practice in key areas such as guided reading. Teaching and learning meetings and moderation by the local authority literacy consultant have contributed to improvement. There is now a literacy subject leader in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 and there was whole-school training in reading in June. Since September, the school has developed guidance for reading for teachers based on the outcomes of lesson observations. This has resulted in such provision as weekly teacher-guided sessions for each group of pupils. The guidelines were arrived at through working with staff and the process highlighted how far consistency had slipped before the Ofsted inspection. The importance of reading is recognised by its inclusion in the performance appraisal for all teachers and teaching assistants. Senior leaders have produced best-

practice examples in a booklet drawn from monitoring, to support improvement. The booklet is available to all staff to use for their own development.

The governors appreciate the importance of improving teaching and learning. They have taken the issues arising from the Ofsted inspection report as the framework for improvement. The action plan that they produced has guided their work on all the points cited in the report of the first monitoring inspection. They are playing a full part in monitoring performance in the school and have set in place systems to bring this about. They identified 16 areas for improvement. They note the rise in the proportion of lessons observed to be good or better from around 55% at the time of the inspection to around 70% currently. Their systematic response to the Ofsted report includes the establishing of an annual cycle of governor activity. There is, for example, a rota for governor of the month, which requires the governor to visit the school with a specific remit and to report their findings to the governing body. The governing body has been restructured and new terms of reference have been completed for each sub-committee. Training has been provided for all governors on performance data and within the year all governors will have received training for their specific roles. They have organised parents' evenings at half-termly intervals, at which two issues raised by parents will be discussed. The governing body recognises the strengthening of the school leadership, the improved and more rigorous analysis and use of data, and the willingness of school staff to take part in the improvement process. They believe the improvements are having a positive impact on teaching and learning.

Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- Teachers contribute to the monitoring of standards in a number of ways. A significant development is the programme for half-termly meetings to consider pupils' progress. Teachers update the tracking database two weeks before the end of the half-term and the meeting takes place in the first week of the next half-term, giving good opportunity for analysis and reflection. The meetings involve teachers in discussing standards with senior leaders and include the special educational needs coordinator.
- The outcomes of monitoring activity are published on a termly basis in a tracking report issued to all staff and governors for discussion. There is now a higher priority for the collection and consideration of performance data.
- There is a new model for staff appraisal that was arrived at through collaboration with a partner headteacher and in consultation with staff. It aims to generate greater involvement by staff in the procedures. There is now a clear timetable for appraisal activities. Staff come to appraisal meetings understanding the process and with a view of their own performance.
- The senior leaders led an audit of the skills that staff have, and invited expression of interest for particular roles in the school. This has resulted in the allocation of staff to roles for which they have appropriate skills. There is a programme of individual coaching to support them.
- There is a specification of responsibilities describing the activities of subject leaders, including monitoring. Subject leaders have received training in-house to do the job of 'leaders of learning'. The timetabling of subject leaders provides time for monitoring activity and subject leaders' records are now completed to log such activities.
- The marking and feedback policy has been refined. It is now implemented and is being monitored and supported through scrutiny of pupils' books.

External support

The local authority continues to work closely with the school, providing challenge and support to leaders. They are providing consultant time for key issues which are identified in liaison with the school leaders. The local authority has appointed an Executive Chair of Governors. They have put a challenge partner in place, who focuses on school improvement with the school leadership. The school has the support of a partner headteacher from a successful school in the authority. She makes frequent visits, working with the headteacher to plan and improve the quality of teaching and learning and to refine policy and procedures in the school. The partner headteacher reports regularly to the school and local authority on her visits. She is part of the school improvement panel that meets half-termly. The panel is organised by the local authority and is attended by the headteacher, partner headteacher, Executive Chair of Governors, challenge partner and assistant director. This meeting complements the governing body's own monitoring and evaluation group. There are improvements reported by these groups, not least the improvement in the quality of teaching.