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17 December 2013

Mrs Lydia Lastowiecki
Headteacher
Sandiacre Cloudside Junior School
Stanton Road
Sandiacre
NG10 5DE

Dear Mrs Lastowiecki

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Sandiacre Cloudside Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 17 December 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 October 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:

- link the improvements being made to teaching to individual teacher performance management targets more closely so that inconsistencies in practice are removed.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. Assessment information, marking and assessment in books and the school's records of teachers' performance in lessons was scrutinised. I visited all nine classes in the school to observe the teaching and learning.

Main findings

Regular checks by the school and the short visits to classrooms today show that, as at the time of the last inspection, the majority of teaching is good. The school improvement plan is a helpful working document covering all the necessary priorities for development. Effective steps have already been made to improving marking and the response from pupils. In most classes it is now effective. Some of the marking in Years 4 and 5 is not helpful enough. One reason for this inconsistency is that the work to improve marking and the pace and challenge in lessons is not sufficiently reflected in individual teacher's performance management targets.

Progress is checked regularly and assessments recorded have been moderated and are accurate. Current data show that in Year 6 the proportion exceeding the expected rate of progress is higher than last year.

The governing body is becoming increasingly effective. Recent training on the interpretation of assessment data has resulted in governors who are much more confident about questioning and analysing the progress made by pupils. The review of governance has been completed and governors have developed some useful strategies to check the work of school leaders.

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

Governors have benefited from some useful training and advice from the local authority. The headteacher also gains from the meetings with the local authority representative to check the progress of the school on its journey to good.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim Bristow
Her Majesty's Inspector