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30 January 2014

Miss Rebecca Cradock
Headteacher
Clayton Village Primary School
John Street
Clayton
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD14 6AD

Dear Miss Cradock

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Clayton Village Primary School, Bradford

Following my visit to your school on 29 January 2014, 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 November 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:

- ensure longer term planning is developed, detailing the actions required for the school to become good
- secure the accuracy of teacher assessments, particularly in reading
- ensure current staffing difficulties are resolved quickly and effectively.

Evidence

During my visit, I had conversations with you and your senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I also spoke with a linked headteacher from a successful local school who is providing advice and support to you. The schools' plan for improvement was evaluated. A brief visit to all classrooms in the school was undertaken. I also looked at work in pupils' books.

Context

The school has had a change in headteacher since the last inspection. The current headteacher has been in post since the start of the term.

Main findings

You and your staff have made a highly effective start to getting your school to good. This is because you have built on the work started by the previous headteacher, sharpened the focus of that work and successfully engaged key people in the process. You and your predecessor have planned well to ensure a smooth transition and maintain a rapid rate of implementation.

Your plans for improving the school are detailed with precise actions that are currently being implemented. Required actions are identified and the impact of some are already evident. Governors have a good understanding about their responsibility for checking the progress being made within the plan. It has challenging targets and milestones to measure the impact of actions in the long term but does not yet have clarity about when the school expects to be good and what further actions may be required to get there.

You have started a comprehensive and timely self-evaluation of the school which is already informing your next steps. You have reviewed teaching and established a robust view of its quality, and have given feedback to staff. You have identified some inconsistencies in the assessments made by teachers of pupils learning. You have begun to address this inconsistency with urgency but further work is still required, particularly with assessments in reading.

There has been an initial focus on the marking of pupils' work to accelerate their learning. The introduction of an 'editing and improving time' at the start of the day has already impacted on the work seen in pupils' books. You have been rigorous and swift in taking action to support improvement in teachers' practice. The school timetable has been redrafted to maximise opportunities for teaching and learning.

Ensuring teaching is at least good and tackling under performance where it exists is a priority. School leaders recognise the challenges that this brings and have robust monitoring procedures in order to maintain this focus. Some staffing issues are impacting on the schools' ability to embed best practice however there is a strong commitment to resolve any remaining issues.

The governing body has a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve. This is because they have been fully involved in overseeing and contributing to the plans for improvement. Since the inspection they have established a new committee structure including a school improvement committee with a clear brief to monitor and evaluate progress against the school action plan. A monthly monitoring visit is now undertaken with the support of members of staff. Governors, school leaders and local authority officers have a joint review programme every half term to keep a tight watching brief on the progress the school is making. Governors recognise the need to build their own capacity and a review of governance has been planned.

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 is providing effective support for the school. They know the school well and participate in a review group with governors and the headteacher to measure progress since the inspection.

You have established additional external support with the help of the local authority. A consultant has done intensive work with teachers on improving writing across the school. You have also established a programme of visits with a good school to share best practice. This partnership work has included reviewing classroom learning environments and additional support for school leadership teams. A detailed plan for how this work is to be developed is now in place.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Brown

Her Majesty's Inspector