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11 February 2014

Nicola Hey & Simon Hey
Greenacres Primary School
Rutland
Off York Road
Shrewsbury
SY1 3QG

Dear Mr & Mrs Hey

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Greenacres Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 10 February 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you and with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. I also met with a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated your plans for improving the school and we discussed the information you use to make judgements about pupils' progress. I also considered minutes of governors' meetings. In addition, I looked at records of the checks that you make on the quality of teaching.

Context

Greenacres is smaller than the average sized primary school with 7 classes including Nursery. You share the role of headteacher. Mrs Hey works three days each week and Mr Hey is headteacher for two days each week and is deputy for the remaining

time. A permanent member of the teaching staff has recently left the school to work elsewhere. Two temporary part time teachers are currently sharing the teaching responsibility for this class. You plan to make a permanent appointment for September. Currently one permanent teacher is absent due to ill-health. A part time teacher is working full time on a temporary basis to cover this absence.

Main findings

You have responded quickly and positively to the findings of the recent inspection and your plans for improvement are closely matched to the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. You have rightly focused on improving the quality of teaching in order to raise achievement. Your plans set out in detail the actions that you are taking in order to make the necessary improvements. You have also identified how you will check that the actions taken are being successful.

You have improved your systems for checking on teachers' performance and you are now regularly visiting lessons to ensure that teaching provides sufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities. Your feedback to teachers following these visits includes clear guidance about what must be improved. You are also checking pupils' books regularly to evaluate their progress and check that the work set is at the right level of difficulty. These checks have shown that teachers' marking is usually effective in identifying what pupils need to do to improve their work. However, not all teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to respond to this advice.

By meeting with every teacher each half term to evaluate the progress of pupils in their class, you are now better able to identify and respond to the needs of any pupils who are not making good progress. Additional support or interventions are being put in place for pupils who are underachieving but you are not yet evaluating the impact of these interventions on pupils' progress.

As a consequence of the changes described above, you are becoming more effective in holding teachers to account for the progress made by pupils in their class. The individual plans which you now intend to create for teachers should assist you in tailoring your monitoring and support so that it is more precisely focused on those teachers who need extra help to improve their teaching.

Teachers and teaching assistants have participated in training focused on improving the teaching of reading. You are also providing more opportunities for pupils to read in school, especially for pupils who do not regularly read at home. You have worked closely with the school library service to carry out an audit of reading books and have ensured that early reading books are based on phonics so that pupils can apply their developing knowledge of the sounds that letters make. These measures have begun to have a positive impact and recent reading assessments show that pupils are making better progress.

Additional training is also planned to provide teaching assistants with clear guidance on their roles and responsibilities. Training for teachers should also be arranged so that their deployment of teaching assistants becomes more effective.

The third member of the leadership team is the relatively recently appointed Assistant Headteacher. He is due to attend training on leading provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. Currently you two are leading subject development in English and mathematics but you are rightly keen to develop further expertise within the school in these essential subjects.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's context and are keen to see the school move forward. They are beginning to focus their meetings more effectively on the quality of teaching and on pupils' learning and have become more involved in checking information about pupils' progress. Some training has already been provided to ensure that governors have a better understanding of how the progress and attainment of pupils compares with pupils nationally. Governors have also undertaken a self-assessment or audit of their skills. This will be used to inform the external review of governance, which is being arranged by the local authority and is due to take place in March. Minutes of meetings indicate that governors are not yet asking enough questions about the information you give to them and so are currently not providing sufficient challenge. Governors need further support to ensure that they all have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Currently, there are three vacancies on the governing body.

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 good support to the school. The school improvement advisor knows the school well and has a clear view of the improvements which need to be made. Good support is being provided by the literacy and mathematics advisors and the local authority has arranged further support from a local leader of education. You have also taken advantage of opportunities for teachers to observe good and outstanding teaching in another school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for insert local authority name and as below.

Yours sincerely

Morag Kophamel
Her Majesty's Inspector