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11 March 2014

Mrs Louise Tempest
Headteacher
Hayfield Lane Primary School
Hayfield Lane
Auckley
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN9 3NB

Dear Mrs Tempest

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hayfield Lane Primary School, Doncaster

Following my visit to your school on 10 March 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:

- Tweak the school's action plan to make it clear what success will look like at monitoring points.
- Ensure teachers are consistently checking that pupils are following up on marking
- Check that pupils' comments on their work are about what they have learned rather than their enjoyment of the task.
- Make sure all pupils can move from task to task without losing focus.
- Ensure teaching assistants' work is consistent in supporting learning and make sure they do not give pupils too much help.

Evidence

During the visit, I met with you and the deputy headteacher, two members of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and the headteacher of the partner school to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school's improvement and action plans. I also toured the school with you and visited lessons. I looked at pupils' work and their behaviour at lunchtime.

Main findings

The headteacher and deputy headteacher, supported efficiently by other leaders and governors, have got off to a brisk start in securing improvements. Much of this early work has rightly been focussed on improving teaching. Where teachers need support, leaders have put in place effective personal improvement plans. This includes regular lesson visits by senior staff who offer helpful tips about how teachers can improve their practice. Most teachers have responded well and consequently teaching is continuing to improve. Leaders are equally robust where teaching is not improving rapidly enough.

Teachers are making better use of resources to make sure less able pupils understand their work more securely. For example, less able pupils in Year 5 used a counting block system to help them calculate percentages confidently. Pupils are recording more work in mathematics and this is making it easier for teachers and leaders to judge how well pupils have understood the work. Pupils and teachers are enjoying a new approach to writing and this is giving pupils more opportunities to write at length

Pupils are now taking a more active part in commenting on what they have learned and identifying what they need to do next to improve their work. This is being done regularly, particularly in mathematics. However, the quality of the comments are sometimes about how much they have enjoyed their work rather than what they have learned. Teachers are making an effort to ensure pupils get time to follow up on marking in their books but this is not consistent across the school.

Leaders have put in place training for teachers to help them manage pupils' behaviour, particularly of those pupils who have specific difficulties. Consequently, the number of incidents of poor behaviour has reduced. Behaviour in the classrooms continues to be calm and orderly although there are occasions when a few pupils find it difficult to move from task to task without losing concentration.

Teaching assistants generally contribute well to supporting pupils' learning by asking questions and keeping pupils' focused on their work. They are also working well in teaching small groups of pupils who are stuck with specific ideas or concepts. However, occasionally teaching assistants let pupils off the hook too easily by giving them the answer to teachers' questions.

Leaders' planning is thorough and identifies the right priorities. It is clear who is responsible for putting actions in place and how the success of those actions will be measured. There are also times identified to check on the progress but it is not always clear what leaders and governors expect to see when they are making interim checks.

Governors continue to keep a close eye on the progress the school is making and they visit the school regularly to make sure they have first-hand information. They check thoroughly on how well disadvantaged pupils are doing. They attend events at the school and they are regularly available for parents at the beginning and end of the school day. However, there are still a few families who do not engage well with the school and governors are seeking to improve this.

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 has brokered effective support from a partner school which the headteacher has particularly valued. The partner school has been helpful in working out ways to tailor support for individual teachers. This support is appropriate and remains an important part of improving the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Joan Hewitt
Her Majesty's Inspector