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Ms Jackie Harland
Headteacher
Boarshaw Community Primary School
Stanycliffe Lane
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Manchester
M24 2PB

Dear Ms Harland

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Boarshaw Community Primary School, Rochdale

Following my visit to your school on 29 April 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on 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 February 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection and plans are not sharply focused on bringing about rapid improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- re-write its action plan so that it:
 - covers a period of two years
 - incorporates the local authority's support plan and the partnership plan
 - identifies clear responsibilities for leading, implementing and monitoring each action
 - includes clear timescales for implementing the actions and specific criteria for evaluating their effectiveness
 - focuses more closely on the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report
- set more ambitious targets for the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, so that the performance expected of them is in line with, or higher than, national averages
- identify clear criteria for assessing the impact on pupils' progress of the additional expenditure on PE.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you, the deputy head teacher, a group of Year 6 pupils, the Chair of Governors and three members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the headteacher of the school to which you are linked. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school action plan and the local authority's support plan and examined other documentation, including data on the progress of pupils and records of the monitoring that you have undertaken since the inspection. I also examined the single central record of staff employed at the school.

Context

Since the inspection in February 2014, a major building programme has been started at the school. Two new members of the non-teaching staff have been appointed, including a temporary business manager.

Main findings

Despite your initial disappointment, you, the staff and the governors accept that the school requires improvement and are very open to advice on how to change things for the better.

Your action plan focuses on the summary section of the report rather than on the section entitled *'What does the school need to do to improve further?'* As a result, it is not clear how the school is going to bring about the specific improvements that inspectors recommended. For example, it does not show precisely what you and your colleagues are going to do to *'provide lessons that make the pupils think hard and behave well'* or set tasks that are *'neither too easy nor too hard for pupils'*. The plan identifies timescales for most actions but it is not always clear who will be responsible for implementing or monitoring those actions.

The actions for improving leadership and management lack detail and are set out in the local authority's support plan rather than in the school action plan. There remains a lack of clarity about how the school will evaluate the impact of its continued investment in PE tuition.

The targets that you have set for Year 6 pupils are not ambitious enough and are lower than the national averages for 2013. You have not set targets for raising attainment at Key Stage 1, although the performance of seven-year-olds has been significantly below national averages for the last three years. Unless you raise expectations at both key stages, the average point score improvements for which you are aiming and the individual pupil targets that you have set will not raise standards enough for the school to become good. It also means that your monitoring arrangements, although thorough, will only have a limited impact on bringing about improvement.

Since the inspection, you, the deputy headteacher and middle managers have conducted unannounced visits to literacy and mathematics lessons, have examined teachers' planning and looked at the quality of work and marking in pupils' books. The analysis of findings provides a very useful summary of the areas where improvements are being made and where further work needs to be done. You have also reorganised the timetable, so that all classes receive an hour's mathematics teaching each day, and have invested in new library resources and accelerated learning schemes for mathematics and English.

The Year 6 pupils to whom I spoke were very enthusiastic about these changes and were able to give specific examples of how they were now doing more difficult work than had been expected of them in the past. They welcomed the new rewards system and the improvements in marking which now gave them a clear idea of how well they were doing and what they needed to do to improve their work. They also commented on the improved behaviour in class, particularly in PE lessons, as well as in the playground.

The governors are very keen to bring about improvement and have asked the local authority to review their effectiveness and to provide them with additional training, particularly on data analysis, so that they are better placed to hold the school to account and to focus support where it is most needed.

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

Since the inspection, a new improvement officer has been assigned to your school by the local authority and arrangements are being made for you to work in collaboration with a successful local school. However, these arrangements are very recent and it is too early to assess their impact and effectiveness.

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

Yours sincerely

Aelwyn Pugh
Her Majesty's Inspector