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Mr Paul Slater
Headteacher
Trumacar Nursery and Community Primary School
Combermere Road
Higher Heysham
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Lancashire
LA3 2ST

Dear Mr Slater

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Trumacar Nursery and Community Primary School, Lancashire

Following my visit to your school on 6 May 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 December 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:

- records of teaching and learning, lesson observations and any scrutiny of work for example, focus on the learning made by pupils
- actions taken and the impact of those actions are always recorded.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, three members of your senior leadership team, four members of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. We discussed the action taken since the last inspection. The school's improvement plan was evaluated. In addition, I toured the school and looked at a sample of the monitoring undertaken by senior leaders.

Main findings

A sense of empowerment is evident. Your decision to delegate leadership across the school is beginning to pay dividends. Middle leaders – those responsible for the

different subjects in the school - are taking a more proactive role in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas. A clear cycle of monitoring is in place. As a result, these leaders are making use of strategies such as lesson observations, discussions with pupils, and scrutinising pupils' work and teachers' planning to identify successfully strengths and areas to develop. For example, the leader for science has identified correctly the need for skills to be taught and developed throughout the school so pupils become more adept at carrying out investigations. This developing leadership is providing you, your senior leaders and governors with an increasingly sharp picture of quality across the curriculum. We agreed, though, it could be sharper still. This is because records of lesson observations and any scrutiny of work are not always focused on the learning made by pupils. In addition, when actions are taken, following a lesson observation for example, there is not always a record of this or the difference such actions have made. This means while you and your leadership team can speak confidently about improvements, you cannot always show the evidence to support your judgements. I will provide support and challenge to you and your senior leaders in the Autumn of 2014 to help you sharpen up this area of your work.

Governors continue to understand well the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2, while improving, is still variable. As a result of their knowledge and understanding, they support and challenge you increasingly well. Your improvement plans are appropriate. Sometimes, though, the intended successes are not always clear. In addition, you all need to ensure your judgements about the quality of teaching are based on a range of evidence, not just on lesson observations alone.

Following disappointing results in reading last year, the focus on this area has been renewed. Your records show results and rates of progress in reading for Year 6 pupils are expected to rise markedly in 2014. In writing your records show results are expected to be similar to those attained last year, but higher in mathematics.

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 confidence in the ability of leaders and governors to improve the school. It knows the school well. It is supporting the development of middle leadership and the ability of such leaders to judge accurately the quality of teaching and learning through bespoke training planned for the summer term 2014.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector