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25 June 2014

Mrs Emily Clark
Acting Headteacher
Carcroft Primary School
Owston Road
Carcroft
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN6 8DR

Dear Mrs Clark

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Carcroft Primary School, Doncaster

Following my visit to your school on 24 June 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 January 2014. 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:

- strengthen the action plan so that the termly milestones are more specific and linked to the progress made by different groups of pupils and the quality of teaching in all classes
- embed and consolidate the systems and procedures recently introduced so that they are used consistently by all staff
- ensure that the support provided for leaders at all levels continues and that it enables them to develop their roles effectively.

Evidence

During the inspection I held meetings with you, the assistant headteacher, middle leaders and the Associate Headteacher. I also met with the Chair and two members

of the governing body plus a representative of the local authority and a National Leader of Education. We discussed how actions taken since the last inspection are contributing towards improving outcomes for all pupils. The school improvement plan and other documents were evaluated and you took me on a tour of the school to see pupils at work.

Context

Following the section 5 inspection the headteacher resigned. A substantive headteacher has been appointed and will take up their post on 1 September 2014. An assistant headteacher was seconded to the senior team and an associate headteacher has been working with you for two days a week since the end of February 2014. One teacher left at Easter and their class is being shared by two teachers. Another class is being taught this term by a temporary member of staff.

Main findings

You are being well supported as you respond positively to the issues identified in the inspection report. The staff and governors who I met realise there is much to do and are embracing their responsibilities well. Implementing clear systems and procedures so that all staff know what is expected of them and when they should do things is helping to set a clear agenda and timescale for improvement. Lesson observations, book scrutiny and pupil progress meetings happen regularly and this is giving a clear awareness of how well pupils are doing across the school. Although the new assessment system is not yet embedded, early indications are that you have a more thorough understanding of pupils' potential than at the time of the previous inspection. Ensuring that all staff give due regard to improving spelling, grammar and punctuation is contributing to pupils' expected better results this year compared to previous years. Nevertheless, as you have identified, writing remains a particular challenge particularly, but not exclusively, for pupils with special educational needs. Strengthening the action plan by setting precise regular goals will enable you to check that these are being met by different groups of pupils and that the quality of teaching in all subjects improves. At present your milestones are too general.

Subject leaders are at an early stage of development and their work to date has been connected mainly with establishing systems and having opportunities to discuss how they propose to improve progress and the quality of teaching. It is too early to judge whether this systems and plans will make a difference.

Following the inspection members of the governing body reflected on the report and are acting constructively so that they become more effective. A review of governance found several strengths but also identified how governors should reorganise their work and committee structures in order to better challenge and hold all leaders to account. Governors welcome the clarity of information provided for them which enables them to understand better how well pupils are doing. It is

positive that governors are keen to be more involved in the work of the school than previously and to have a higher profile with staff, pupils and parents.

I plan to monitor the progress being made carefully; to check that your plans and systems are making a difference to the quality of teaching and the progress made by all groups of pupils. A further visit will be made during the second half of the autumn term.

External support

The support from a National Leader of Education, already in place prior to the inspection, has continued. The local authority strengthened leadership immediately following the headteacher's resignation by appointing an Associate Headteacher. Their work is complimentary and supports you and other leaders as your roles develop. In addition, the local authority representative monitors the performance of the school together with supporting governors.

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

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector