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David Tow
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Tow

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Broadfield East Junior School

Following my visit to your academy on 15 July 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 academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in April 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders, governors and sponsor are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- clarify the role of governors in checking the progress the school is making
- ensure pupils are consistently given opportunities to respond to teachers' feedback so that they can improve their work.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the sponsor, The Kenmal Academies Trust (TKAT) to discuss the

action taken since the last inspection. The academy improvement plan was evaluated. With you, I visited all classes and I scrutinised a selection of pupils' books.

Context

Since the last inspection four new teachers have been appointed to begin work at the academy in September.

Main findings

Since the inspection you and the leadership team have worked with drive and commitment to address the key areas for improvement. As a result there has been a rapid change of culture in the school. Staff have a good understanding of the need for urgent improvement and have supported the changes that have been made. Expectations have been raised about what pupils can achieve and staff are keen to support pupils to do their best. For example, all year 6 pupils were paired up with a member of staff who acted as their personal mentor in the lead up to recent Key Stage 2 assessments. This enabled staff to provide individual help and support to pupils.

The quality of teaching is improving. Staff have benefited from tailored training and support to improve their practice. Teachers are clear about your expectations of their planning. This is now more detailed and shows how work is set at the right level for pupils of different abilities. Rigorous and frequent checking of this planning is ensuring that a consistent approach is being maintained across the school.

The school improvement plan is detailed and clearly structured to show how each area for improvement is being tackled and how and when progress will be measured at key points along the way. However, the plan does not make clear enough what the governors' role will be in checking the progress the school is making.

You have reviewed and revised the school's marking policy and established clear expectations for the feedback pupils receive. Pupils' books show they are frequently given detailed advice for their next steps in learning. However, inconsistencies remain about how and when pupils respond to these comments in their work.

Senior leaders have created a robust system for tracking pupils' progress. All teachers now receive detailed information about how well pupils are doing and they are using this information effectively to give extra support for those pupils who need it. Teachers are more aware of pupils' progress over time and are more accountable for taking action to address any underachievement. Recent unvalidated Key Stage 2 results show pupils making better progress than in previous years and most pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding are now achieving as well as their classmates.

Subject leaders are undertaking more rigorous monitoring of their areas. This means they are increasingly accountable for raising standards and this is enabling them to take a more prominent role in improving the quality of teaching. These subject leaders are developing their skills as a result of working closely with senior leaders because they have the opportunity to observe good role models of leadership in action.

Expectations of pupils' written work have been raised. Pupils are being given more opportunities for extended writing in a range of styles. You are raising the profile and importance of these skills in a variety of ways, for example displays of pupils' writing around the school. Pupils now have increased opportunities to practise their handwriting. Improvements in the standard of presentation of pupils' work and their handwriting can be seen in pupils' books, although this is stronger in some year groups than others.

Better communication is being established between the school and parents. Senior leaders have formed a group of 'parent ambassadors'. This is providing a useful forum for parents to give feedback about the school's work and is giving senior leaders a valuable sounding board for proposed changes.

Governors have a good understanding of the improvements that have been made and what still needs to be done. Governors are asking more challenging questions of senior leaders but understand the need for further training in interpreting assessment information to strengthen this practice. There is no parental representation on the governing body and governors understand that this needs to be rectified urgently.

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

Representatives from TKAT provide an appropriate level of support and challenge to senior leaders. Regular monitoring visits and reviews of assessment information ensure that senior leaders are held to account. TKAT's representatives have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The trust has provided valuable support for senior leaders through its network of local schools and its provision of effective training for teachers to improve their practice.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for West Sussex, and the Academies Advisers Unit at the Department of Education.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Moore
Her Majesty's Inspector