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Ms Lizzie Wray
Headteacher
Crowcroft Park Primary School
Northmoor Road
Longsight
Manchester
M12 5SY

Dear Ms Wray

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Crowcroft Park Primary School, Manchester

Following my visit to your school on 22 September 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 May 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:

- ensure all staff immediately receive appropriate training and guidance in order to fulfil the statutory requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- ensure governors receive detailed information on the progress pupils, and groups of pupils, are making for each year group, so they can regularly check on the pace of school improvement.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, representatives of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. These meetings were held in order to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated

the school improvement plan and scrutinised records of lesson observations and external reports on the quality of provision.

Context

Three teachers have left since the section 5 inspection in May 2014. In September, two new teachers started in Years 3 and 5 and a new teaching assistant was appointed to work in Year 1. School leaders have recently appointed an additional teacher to work in Year 2.

Main findings

School leaders have taken swift and decisive action in response to the findings of the recent inspection. They have restructured the teams that teachers work in across the school. They have ensured that there is an outstanding practitioner within each phase of education, such as in the Early Years Foundation Stage, or in lower Key Stage 2. This, alongside new opportunities for staff to share preparation time, has enabled teachers to work more closely together to plan and review learning. Leaders have also introduced a new, online tool by which the progress of pupils can be tracked. This is enabling teaching staff to have immediate access to the progress groups of pupils make, and to adjust their classroom practice accordingly. Leaders have strengthened the systems by which they evaluate the quality of teaching. They have undertaken lesson observations and provided time for teachers to coach each other in their individual areas for improvement. However, the feedback that leaders provide for teachers still does not focus enough on how well different groups of pupils are learning in lessons.

Leaders have worked with the local authority to draw up a succinct school improvement plan. This details the actions they will take to improve teaching across the school. The timescale for these improvements is appropriate. However, leaders have not yet agreed detailed criteria, and in particular, pupil outcomes, by which they can keep a close check on the success of these plans.

Governors have streamlined their committee structure to ensure greater consistency of attendance at meetings. They have reflected carefully on the provision they make for pupils in the early stages of their time at the school. They have identified the need to increase the amount of support pupils receive so they can quickly catch-up and reach age-related expectations by the end of Year 2. Consequently, members have allocated significant additional resources into Key Stage 1 to strengthen teaching. This has enabled greater stability in staffing and has increased the capacity for adults to respond to the individual needs of pupils.

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 provided advisory support to the school following the last inspection. The headteacher has worked with this adviser to draw up the school improvement plan and to review pupil outcomes at the end of the last academic year. This has validated school leaders' views on what the next steps to school improvement should be. Leaders benefit greatly from working with a local network of schools, including sharing monitoring activities with some outstanding school leaders. This has increased the headteacher's confidence, and has improved some of the guidance given to teachers about how to best use lesson time and additional adult support in lessons.

I am copying this letter to Suzanne Richards, the Chair of the Governing Body, and to Mike Livingstone, the Strategic Director of Children's and Commissioning Services for Manchester.

Yours sincerely

Philippa Darley
Her Majesty's Inspector