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26 September 2014

Ms Sue Balfour-Bellamy  
Acting Headteacher  
Leaside Community Primary School  
Leeds Old Road  
Heckmondwike  
West Yorkshire  
WF16 9BB

Dear Ms Balfour-Bellamy

### **Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Leaside Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 24 and 25 September 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and findings of the inspection. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's most recent monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged as having serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in June 2013. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation. It is my recommendation that the next inspection be a full section 5 re-inspection.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director for Children and Adults for Kirklees.

Yours sincerely

Ian Richardson

**Additional Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in June 2013**

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is at least good in Key Stage 2, in order to raise standards and accelerate progress to good or better, particularly in mathematics, by:
  - ensuring that the assessment of how well pupils are doing is used more effectively to guide teachers in planning lessons and providing pupils with activities which meet their learning needs
  - ensuring that challenge in lessons is consistently high and enables pupils to do as well as they should
  - giving pupils more opportunities, including in pairs and in groups, to find things out for themselves
  - improving teachers' questioning so that pupils are required to answer in more detail and also justify their views
  - improving the deployment of teaching assistants so that they can support and challenge pupils more effectively
  - sharing across the school the good and exemplary classroom practice which already exists.
  
- Improve the impact of leadership and management at all levels by:
  - ensuring that systems to monitor all aspects of the school's work lead to an accurate view of its performance, to enable school leadership to take the action necessary to address weaknesses
  - distributing leadership responsibilities more widely across the staff, in order that their individual skills can be used more effectively
  - ensuring that the monitoring of teachers' classroom performance focuses more closely on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress
  - deploying staff more effectively so that their skills are used exactly where they are needed
  - ensuring governors consistently ask searching questions of the leaders so that they are fully aware of the school's performance and particularly of how well pupils are achieving.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 24 and 25 September 2014**

### **Evidence**

The inspector met with the acting headteacher and another senior leader to discuss performance data. He then held a meeting to establish the improvements in the school through scrutiny of documents and discussion with the acting headteacher and two other senior leaders. The inspector carried out five lesson observations jointly with two senior leaders and interviewed six pupils from Year 6. He attended a work scrutiny session with a senior leader and held discussions with the Chair of the Governing Body and the vice-chair. The inspector met with an officer of the local authority and a National Leader of Education. He also held discussions with a group of three teachers who were in post at the time of the inspection. The focus of the monitoring inspection was to check the evidence of progress made against the points for improvement identified in the June 2013 Ofsted inspection report.

### **Context**

Prior to the last inspection the headteacher had recently gone on long-term sick leave and an acting headteacher was appointed who still remains in post. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has resigned. The acting headteacher has expanded the senior leadership team and clarified roles and responsibilities. There is now a group of eight staff who constitute the senior leadership team with five members of this group making up the executive senior leadership team. Three members of support staff and five teachers have left the school since the inspection.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

The acting headteacher and reconfigured team of senior leaders are providing strong and effective leadership in raising standards and bringing about improvement. Interviews with members of staff show that the priorities for improvement are understood across the range of staff. The senior leader responsible for assessment and data carries out the analysis of performance data to identify any differences between groups. The ways in which teaching and learning are monitored are now carried out consistently. The data gathered are analysed thoroughly to evaluate the progress of pupils and the effectiveness of teaching. All teachers have been trained in the analysis of performance data and all carry this out for their class and participate fully in progress review meetings with senior leaders. These meetings lead to changes in planning and intervention for individual pupils to promote effective learning.

The same rigour is now applied to the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching. At the time of the inspection in June 2013, the quality of teaching was judged to be inadequate. In July 2014 a review of teaching, carried out in the school and shared with the local authority, showed clear evidence that the quality of teaching was improving. Evidence gathered during this monitoring inspection also indicates that teaching is improving and shows a high level of agreement with the views of senior leaders about the quality of teaching. Pupils rate their teachers highly. In discussion, some Year 6 pupils all said that their teachers were outstanding. They really appreciated the marking and feedback they received and described how these helped them to improve. Scrutiny of pupils' books showed how they were responding positively to teachers' marking and they were making progress in the standards they were attaining.

The senior leaders have improving the quality of teaching and learning as a priority for the school. As a consequence of staff training, rigorous monitoring and thorough analysis of performance data, teaching has improved and the standards that pupils attain are rising. The way in which teachers are responsible for the collection and analysis of performance data in consistent ways has resulted in them planning for individuals more effectively and providing better challenge to pupils. Pupils describe how they are working harder this year. This summer the pupils attained the best national test results for four years. The performance of pupils has lifted results towards what was the latest national average. The gaps in performance between different groups of pupils and against national standards are narrowing. Performance data are collected six times a year and this allows the rapid identification of any slowing down of progress of individuals and the planning of appropriate intervention.

There have been significant changes to the governing body since the inspection. There is a new Chair of the Governing Body and over half the members of the governing body have been replaced. The committee structure has been reduced to two groups. The governors are tackling monitoring and evaluation in a rigorous way. For example, the standards and effectiveness committee has required answers to specific questions on the performance data gathered and analysed by senior leaders. This scrutiny is a way of ensuring data are robust and reliable and leads to well-informed views and supports a continuing culture of evaluation. The questions and reports required by governors are described in the minutes of the meetings and appropriate records are kept systematically. The governing body is providing both support and challenge, for instance, over the review and rationalisation of the support staff. For example, governors raised a question about the effectiveness of support staff. This resulted in a review of support staff and the analysis of performance data to identify their value. The review resulted in the loss of some staff and the different deployment and priorities of others. Data now show how teaching assistants are having a greater positive impact on learning.

### **Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- Prior to the June 2013 inspection there was little scrutiny of teaching, learning and standards. While performance data were gathered they were characterised by an absence of moderation and lack of consistency. Under the management of the acting headteacher this situation has changed.
- Staff interviewed describe the systems put in place by senior leaders to bring about consistency. Teachers' own confidence and capability have been enhanced by purposeful training. They feel involved in the monitoring process and have an increased sense of responsibility but feel well supported by leaders.
- Senior leaders have also provided support through such innovations as staff working in triads to discuss and develop their teaching.
- Staff believe they are effectively consulted and that decisions of senior leaders are well communicated.
- Behaviour of pupils has also improved. During observations around school, behaviour was at least good in all lessons and attitudes to learning were positive. The school has moved from a model of behaviour management mainly involving staff expressing their disapproval, to a system of restorative practice to improve behaviour.
- The school is providing a calm well-managed environment for learning. The thorough ongoing refurbishment of the buildings, decoration, carpeting and replacement of old furniture has been a significant improvement.

- There has been significant staff mobility since the inspection but the senior leaders have planned strategically for change, how to accommodate staff changes and maintain provision.

### **External support**

Local authority officers, including a National Leader in Education, have affirmed the progress made by this school. They recognise the improvements in teaching and learning and the consequential raising of standards of attainment. Steps taken by senior leaders seen as contributing to improvement include good action planning and establishing the accountability of staff. Both these elements are recognised by staff as bringing about improvement and they are encouraged that they were developed through consultation. Systematic moderation has been introduced within the school and through collaboration with other schools in the Spenborough Co-operative Trust and national support schools.