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1 October 2014

Mrs Gabrielle Gray
Headteacher
Shevington Community Primary School
Miles Lane
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Wigan
Lancashire
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Dear Mrs Gray

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Shevington Community Primary School, Wigan

Following my visit to your school on 30 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.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the senior leadership team, five teachers, the Acting Chair and four members of the Governing Body, the Chair of the local federation of schools and eight pupils, selected at random from Years 3 to 6. I also spoke to the Assistant Director of Education and the school improvement officer from the local authority. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I examined the single central record of staff employed at the school, as well as the school's action plan and a number of related documents.

Context

Since the inspection, the headteacher and two teachers have left the school. The Chair of the Governing Body has resigned and been replaced by an Acting Chair. In September, an executive headteacher and two associate headteachers were appointed to run the school, on an interim basis, until a decision is made on whether it will join a federation with two neighbouring schools. The consultation on this comes to an end on 20 October 2014.

Main findings

Rapid changes have been made to the school since the inspection, particularly this term.

You have conducted individual interviews with each member of staff and have spoken to groups of pupils, to gather their views on the strengths and areas for development within the school. You have also involved teachers closely in revising the development plan. This is now a single, succinct and readable document which gives a very clear indication of how and when you will tackle each of the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report.

You and your staff have conducted a detailed analysis of results, set targets for each child and identified those individuals or groups of pupils who will need additional help to reach their goals. You have also established a programme of regular reviews of pupils' progress.

All teachers have been observed teaching. They have received clear feedback on where they are performing well and have been helped to draw up an action plan for further improvement. To support this work, individual teachers have visited other schools to observe good practice, for instance in using areas outside the school to enhance learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. You have conducted book scrutinies to identify where improvement needs to be made in the content, presentation and marking of work. You are also subscribing to the library service in order to extend the choice of books available in the school.

The impact of these changes is being felt by pupils. The ones to whom I spoke welcomed the wider range of reading materials in the school. They are now being expected to take greater care over handwriting and presentation, as a result of which more work is being displayed and celebrated on the 'working wall'. They talked about the increased use of drama in literacy lessons and were delighted with the way that one classroom had been converted into a court room for the trial of Robin Hood. They were also very enthusiastic about the wider choices offered to them through the revised rewards system.

Like the pupils, the teachers to whom I spoke were very positive about the changes that you have implemented. They particularly appreciated the way that you have

listened to their ideas and involved them in decision making. They also felt that they are now being encouraged to take a more creative approach to their teaching and have been provided with helpful, focused feedback on their work. Therefore, despite their initial disappointment with the inspection judgements, they are determined and confident that the school will be good in twelve months' time.

The reviews of governance and the use of the Pupil Premium have now been completed. The governors to whom I spoke are developing an increasing understanding of how they can hold the school to account. They have a clear view of the particular focus that needs to be placed on improving boys' results and closing the gap between the performance of pupils receiving Pupil Premium funding and the rest of the school population. The governors also welcomed the increased opportunities to be more closely involved with staff and pupils. Good links are being established with the governing body of the federation, in preparation for the next stage in the school's development.

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

Since the inspection, the local authority, in collaboration with partner schools, has moved swiftly to ensure that the school has strong leadership in the immediate term and to establish a firm basis for its future. You and your colleagues are making good use of the support provided.

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

Yours sincerely

Aelwyn Pugh

Her Majesty's Inspector