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Sioux Cooke
Heateacher
Howes Community Primary School
Palmero Avenue
Cheylesmore
Coventry
CV3 5EH

Dear Miss Cooke

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Howes Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 October 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 June 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 that the targets in English books are used as effectively as those in mathematics books.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and your senior leadership team, the Chair and a member of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school

development plan. I scrutinised a range of documents including pupils' progress data, monitoring records and the impact of performance management. I also visited nine lessons, including a parent workshop, and talked with groups of pupils and parents.

Context

There have been a number of staff changes since the recent inspection. A new nursery nurse, two teaching assistants, a learning mentor and a newly qualified teacher joined in September. A teacher and a teaching assistant have left the school.

Main findings

You and your deputy headteacher are continuing the drive for rapid improvement. Your action plan has carefully considered milestones and aspirational targets that enable you to monitor progress accurately. You provide timely training and support to staff. Their individual needs are identified through your monitoring and performance management procedures.

Leadership at all levels is improving. Your recent formation of subject teams has improved the leadership of English and mathematics across the school. All staff are clear about their roles. They have begun to identify and share the good practice in the school.

Teachers' use of pupils' progress information is improving. This has helped to sharpen pupils' targets and improve challenge in lessons. As a result, pupils are making better progress. Targets in mathematics are consistently used by pupils because the target, written on the book flap, is moved each lesson into the new piece of work. Consequently, pupils refer to their mathematics targets. This is not the case in English, therefore some pupils do not refer to their targets and opportunities to improve are missed. Teachers' marking better explains to pupils how to improve their work and pupils are given time to respond to marking. Pupils stated they found teachers' marking helpful.

You have introduced a range of enrichment activities that are improving the challenge for the most able. This has begun to have an impact in lessons. Pupil digital leaders run, with teacher support, a popular club for information technology that promotes e-safety and the use of control software. Pupils were proud of the interesting work they had completed in the Royal Institute's mathematics master classes, taught by specialists. The recently commenced Erasmus Plus project is exciting pupils as they relish the opportunities to work with other pupils in schools across Europe. Pupils stated they liked the language of the month and learning from each other.

Parents are very positive about the improved communication with school through the weekly newsletters and text messages. Parents stated that the staff are very

approachable. In particular, parents enjoy the recently introduced workshop sessions. Parents find the information packs and CDs help them work with their child at home to complete mathematics homework and to use the correct method to set out problems.

The governing body is better informed and this is improving governors' challenge to you. They have initiated opportunities to meet with parents through the recently started monthly staff surgeries and regular coffee mornings. Governors are in the process of re-organising governors' responsibilities so that they can make links with the subject teams.

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 provides sensitive support and challenge to the school through detailed consultation with you. The school improvement board meets regularly to check on the school's progress and hold you and governors to account. Subject leaders have benefited from sharing their action plans and targets with the school improvement partner. This has enabled the school improvement partner to quality assure the work. The action plan to support newly qualified teachers has been developed through this process.

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

Yours sincerely

Michelle Parker
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter has been copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy

