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13 November 2014

Jane Baxter
Executive Headteacher
Ranskill Primary School
Cherry Tree Walk
Ranskill
Retford
DN22 8LH

Dear Mrs Baxter

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Ranskill Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 14 November 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 July 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At the previous section 5 inspection, the school was also judged to require improvement.

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, meetings were held with the executive headteacher and acting headteacher, the Chair and Vice-chair of Governors, and a representative of the local authority. I visited all classrooms, held discussion with pupils, and looked at examples of their books and other work. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I scrutinised the most-recent nationally produced and school data on the

pupils' achievement, a self-evaluation report prepared by the school and the outcomes of monitoring activities carried out by senior and other leaders.

Main findings

The school has depended upon the interim and, therefore, temporary arrangements for senior leadership of the school to make progress with the areas for improvement identified at the inspection. With the full support and close involvement of the governing body, the interim senior leaders are working progressively to tackle the areas for improvement.

The improvement plan that has been drawn up sets out clearly heightened and more-appropriate expectations for the achievement of the pupils. Those expectations are now being reflected in the performance management of the staff. The improvement plan includes suitable actions to be taken. The measures by which the school will assess its progress are not sufficiently clear, however, and the plan does not identify how all of the available external support will be used.

The latest data on the pupils' achievement show improvements. Weaknesses are still apparent, however, in the pupils' writing and in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The pupils are now being given a wider variety of writing to do and are producing longer, more-challenging pieces of work.

There is greater attention being paid now to developing the pupils' handwriting. The introduction of 'pen licences' has made the pupils more aware of the need to write well and increased their motivation to do so. The pupils are not being expected often enough to improve the quality of their handwriting, when it has not been to the required standard in particular pieces of work.

Senior leaders are checking the progress of the pupils and the quality of the school's work more systematically than previously. The information collected to date shows that the staff are responding to the changes in the school's policies, for example, in relation to teaching handwriting. The school's records show that the staff are being given feedback on the work, which includes improvements that can be made. The feedback is not always sufficiently clear and precise about what needs to be improved.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection. I have recommended that a further visit takes place to monitor the progress of the school, with particular reference to improvements in leadership and management.

External support

The local authority has been central to arranging support for the school and, in particular, in making the arrangements for the interim leadership. It continues to

provide much-needed coordination, practical advice, and a source of external evaluation of progress. A programme of professional development for the staff has been planned, making use of a partnership with a good school, which has been arranged by the local authority.

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

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

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