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11 November 2014

Mrs Donna Bedford
Headteacher
Tadcaster East Community Primary School
Grange Avenue
Tadcaster
North Yorkshire
LS24 8AN

Dear Mrs Bedford

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Tadcaster East Community Primary School, North Yorkshire

Following my visit to your school on 7 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 its 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 you and your assistant headteacher. I met with pupils to discuss their work and looked at a sample of their English, mathematics and topic books. I met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated and a sample of the school's monitoring records were analysed.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection one class teacher in Years 2 and 3 has left the school and a new teacher took up post in September 2014. A new Chair of the Governing Body was elected in time for the new academic year.

Main findings

You are working with great determination and focus with staff and governors to make sure that the momentum of improvement, evident during the past year, is maintained and continues to build. This is important if the aim of being a good school is to be realised. School plans include a detailed set of actions to tackle the aspects of leadership and of teaching quality that are not yet good. The impact of actions is not always spelt out clearly enough in the success criteria in these plans. It was clear in the discussions that you, the assistant headteacher and governors have a shared understanding of what you are trying to achieve this term. However, more sharply defined success measures would be useful in helping to accurately pinpoint where further work is needed to ensure that the pace of improvement does not falter.

Your monitoring and feedback to staff have ensured that the presentation and marking policies are being implemented with more consistency. Staff are responding to your increased expectations around their analysis and use of data to help them plan work. Pupils' targets and homework are being shared with parents and carers but information about what their children are learning in the curriculum is not shared with them in sufficient detail. Pupils are enjoying the mathematics groups that they are now working in. They know their targets and they are finding that the work is making them think and work more carefully. This is evident in most books although there is still some way to go to improve the accuracy and standard of handwriting. The additional opportunities for writing, for example in science and in history, are helping pupils to apply and embed their skills.

By involving governors in monitoring of the school's work you and the assistant headteacher are helping them to get a firmer grasp of the steps being taken and where further improvement is required. Work to extend and develop subject leadership is at an early stage but plans show a greater focus on this key aspect is to begin in the next few weeks.

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

School leaders are developing a more strategic approach to using external support from the local authority and good and outstanding schools in the Sherburn and

Tadcaster Alliance. For example, school plans show a focused approach to draw upon practice in other schools to improve tracking systems, the teaching of writing and teachers' assessments. This work has yet to begin and it is imperative that leaders and governors keep careful oversight of its impact. To this end, governors have commissioned a review of the school's work by the local authority in Spring 2015.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for North Yorkshire and as below.

Yours sincerely

Gina White

Her Majesty's Inspector