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25 November 2014

Mrs Kellie Halliday
Headteacher
Hovingham Primary School
Hovingham Avenue
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS8 3QY

Dear Mrs Halliday

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hovingham Primary School, Leeds

Following my visit to your school on 24 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.

This 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 the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, two governors, including the vice-chair, and a representative from the local authority. The inspector and the headteacher visited a small number of lessons together to jointly observe teaching and learning. Documents related to monitoring, school improvement planning and achievement information, together with a small sample of books were scrutinised.

Context

Significant staff change has taken place since the inspection in July. New appointments include the headteacher, one senior and two middle leaders, and five newly qualified teachers.

Main findings

The headteacher has made a positive start in tackling the school's improvement issues. She has restructured and refreshed the senior and the middle leadership teams. In doing so, she has introduced greater clarity in terms of her expectations and leaders' understanding of their increased responsibility. The school now needs to review its improvement and action plans so they show exactly what each leader is accountable for, and when and how their work will be measured to ensure improvement continues at pace.

Staff are responding well to the headteacher's changes and this is reflected in the significant reduction in staff absence. Pupil attendance has also increased. In those lessons observed, pupils behaved well and were fully engaged in learning, working with their peers and all adults in the classroom. The newly qualified teachers are benefiting from the comprehensive monitoring and support provided by a senior leader.

All staff have received well-targeted training and a new monitoring cycle has been introduced. However, the school's review of the assessment system must now be prioritised to ensure that data for all classes and groups is more readily available for scrutiny by both leaders and teachers.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, a new team leader has been appointed and there has been a full review of the teaching expertise of both teaching and support staff. There has also been a significant change in the layout of the classrooms and the outdoor spaces, so that the Nursery and Reception children have greater opportunities to interact and use all the provision areas. The school now needs to accelerate its work on tackling assessment in this area and also, when financially feasible, improve the quality of the environment and the resources.

The governing body is currently reviewing the committee structure to ensure that they are able to more robustly analyse the impact of developments on key priority areas. Linked governors have already started to visit and monitor the work of leaders within the new structure.

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 is acutely aware of the key improvement areas and has previously supported the school well in dealing with the considerable and rapid

turnover of staff and leaders in recent years. Since July, it has provided transition support for the new headteacher and the school's work continues to be closely monitored by the school improvement adviser. It is also providing consultant support and brokering links within the cluster with targeted schools to support the school's need to secure rapid improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Angela Headon

Her Majesty's Inspector