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10 December 2014

Mr M McKelvie
Principal
Pudsey Grangefield School
Mount Pleasant Road
Pudsey
West Yorkshire
LS28 7ND

Dear Mr McKelvie

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Pudsey Grangefield School, Leeds

Following my visit to your school on 9 December 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 September 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:

- revise the school improvement plan to ensure that all aspects are clearly aligned to each of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection
- ensure that the revised plan includes specific and discreet monitoring and evaluation procedures
- ensure that at the stated review points senior leaders and governors focus on the evaluation of actions, rather than their completion, and that they use the outcomes of these assessments to determine next steps

- clarify within the plan the precise role of governors in ensuring that the actions identified bring about the necessary improvements
- forward this revised plan to the monitoring HMI as soon as it is completed and ratified by the governing body, and at the latest by half term in February 2015
- as a matter of urgency, undertake the review of the pupil premium and implement swiftly the recommendations made.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the principal, the rest of the senior leadership team, a group of governors, and a school improvement officer representing the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated, as was a range of other documentation. This included the minutes of the most recent governors' meetings, the local authority support plan, reports of reviews undertaken by external consultants, the latest data on students' performance, and evidence on recently completed reviews of the quality of teaching and on behaviour and attendance. I undertook a tour of the school which included visits to a number of subject areas including art and design, design and technology, English, mathematics and science.

Context

Since the inspection there have been no changes in teaching staff but there have been changes in the governing body. A new chair has taken up her post and four new parent governors have been elected.

Main findings

The principal, other senior leaders and governors are clear about the actions which need to be implemented to bring about the changes required. They are focused on raising students' achievement by improving the quality of teaching, students' attendance and behaviour and the quality of leadership and management.

Governors receive detailed reports from senior leaders on a regular basis and are developing a more accurate understanding of the school and what needs to be achieved to ensure the school is judged at least good at its next inspection. The review of governance recommended at the inspection has not yet been completed. Governors have undertaken a skills' audit and meetings are planned to review current processes. They recognise that the review offers an ideal opportunity for them to reconsider how they approach their responsibilities. It is intended that the review will be completed early in the New Year after which an appropriate action plan will be created.

Governors are skilled individuals and provide support and challenge in equal measure to senior leaders. They are highly supportive of the principal's vision for the

school. They are ambitious but recognise that there is much more to do to ensure that all students achieve the highest possible grades in all their subjects. Under the leadership of a new chair, governors have already revised their committee structure and created three sub-committees focused on resources, student support, and curriculum and achievement. However, the criteria they will use and the process they will follow to monitor and evaluate the school improvement plan are not sufficiently clear.

Senior leaders have amalgamated the areas for improvement identified by the inspection team into their current school improvement plan. Although the plan is somewhat lengthy, it does not identify clearly enough all aspects of these areas for improvement. In addition, monitoring and evaluation procedures are not stipulated adequately and the plans give little indication as to precise governor involvement. In effect, monitoring and evaluation procedures are not sharp enough and cannot be used effectively to hold senior leaders to account. The improvement plan should contain precise monitoring and evaluation procedures and named individuals or committees which will undertake these tasks. Monitoring and evaluation should be by different people. School leaders are aware that comments on progress must focus on the impact of actions upon students' achievement as well as highlighting whether the actions have been completed.

Although governors have not yet ratified this plan, senior leaders have started work on the most important actions to bring about improvement and their efforts are already having beneficial results. For example, work to improve students' attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism is already having a positive impact. The systems used by senior leaders to check the quality of teaching have been overhauled to give a more realistic view of what is happening in classrooms on a day to day basis. The results of this checking are being used more smartly to inform the training required by staff and leading to bespoke approaches to help individual teachers improve their practice. Middle leaders are being held to account much more directly for the quality of teaching and learning in their departments and, where appropriate, additional support is being provided to help them to be more effective in their roles. Although the improvement plan covers the principal areas for improvement identified at the inspection, it is unacceptable that the school has not yet made any substantive progress on commissioning a review of its use of the pupil premium. This is now a matter of priority.

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 providing effective support for the school. It is supporting the review of governance. It has commissioned a personal mentor headteacher and a professional mentor consultant to work with the headteacher and senior leaders and their support has been much appreciated. The school is also benefiting from the

work of external consultants it has arranged itself to support the improvement agenda.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Maddison
Her Majesty's Inspector