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11 December 2014

Julie Bratt
Headteacher
Albrighton Primary School
New House Lane
Albrighton
Wolverhampton
WV7 3QS

Dear Mrs Bratt

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Albrighton Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 10 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 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 when pupils complete their 'Big Write' they apply the literacy skills they have been learning.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, your deputy headteacher and phase leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, the local authority's school improvement partner and pupils, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I scrutinised a range of documents and visited eleven lessons.

Context

The previous headteacher retired at the end of the summer term 2014. You took up post in September 2014 together with a new phase leader. A part time teacher left and the remaining part time teacher is now full time. One teacher is on maternity leave. Two newly qualified teachers and an experienced teacher have joined the staff. The school is working with the Albrighton and Shifnal schools' cluster.

Main findings

The leadership of the school is improving. Since your appointment, you have raised expectations for all staff and pupils. These are reflected in the more ambitious targets in school's new development plan that are based on your analysis of the 2014 end of Key Stage 2 results. You share the development plan with staff and discuss monitoring information regularly at staff meetings. Currently, staff do not annotate the plan with their evidence of impact.

All members of the leadership team have clear roles and responsibilities. They are accountable through their regular reports to the governing body. Each member of the senior leadership team has responsibility for phase meetings, sharing information with staff and moderating marking. Phase leaders observe lessons and scrutinise pupils' work. They have used this information to draw up their action plans. As a result, your monitoring of teaching is more rigorous. The local authority endorses this approach. You have introduced training records for staff linked to their appraisal and their targets for improving pupils' progress. Newly qualified teachers have individual support and training programmes to help them develop their practice.

Teachers are more accountable for their teaching. In progress meetings, teachers describe how well their pupils are doing and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions to support those who are underperforming. Teachers monitor the performance of groups of pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium, the most able and pupils who have a disability or special educational needs. These regular reviews are helping teachers to plan work that is better matched to pupils' different starting points.

Teaching is improving. You have introduced a structure to help teachers develop their teaching to good and outstanding. Teachers' displays in classrooms and corridors are of a higher standard and link more closely to pupils' learning. You have introduced reading areas in every classroom, which are encouraging pupils to read more often. The accelerated reading programme is encouraging the most able to read more frequently. Staff are expected to mark English and mathematics books every day so that they can identify pupils' weaknesses and address them in the

following lesson. As a result, teachers' planning is improving. In mathematics, pupils' are making better progress because their misconceptions are being identified and addressed.

The teaching of literacy is stronger. The new member of the leadership team who has responsibility for literacy is beginning to address the weaknesses. You have introduced a progressive structure, 'sentence ladders' to improve pupils' writing that is implemented from Reception through to the end of Year 6. Pupils explained how they use the sentence ladders to improve their writing. The introduction of the 'Big Write' is increasing the amount and quality of pupils' writing. However, not all pupils' 'Big Writing' is making good use of the literacy skills they are developing in their English lessons.

Teaching assistants are deployed more effectively. Small group work is better organised because there is a tighter focus on tackling pupils' weaknesses. The appointment of an extra teacher to work with targeted pupils is helping those pupils to make better progress and tackle work that is more challenging.

Governors are more confident in carrying out their duties because they are better informed and more included in the life of the school. As a result, they are able to ask pertinent questions to hold you to account.

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 timely support provided by the local authority is carefully matched to your needs. The participation of staff in the cluster of schools is providing opportunities for the sharing of good practice. Newly qualified teachers are supported well through arrangements in the cluster.

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

Yours sincerely

Michelle Parker
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

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