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Mrs Donna Makepeace
Headteacher
Skipton, Ings Community Primary and Nursery School
Broughton Road
Skipton
North Yorkshire
BD23 1TE

Dear Mrs Makepeace

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Skipton, Ings Community Primary and Nursery School, North Yorkshire

Following my visit to your school on 13 January 2015, 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 October 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:

- Strengthen planning to make clearer to staff and governors the impact each action is intended to have on pupils' achievement.
- Accelerate training and support so that subject leaders develop their skills to monitor and evaluate provision rigorously in order that plans are sharply focused on what needs to be done to improve learning and achievement.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and subject leaders, members of the Interim Executive Board of governors, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's improvement planning was evaluated. Samples of school monitoring records were

analysed. Discussions were held with pupils about their work in reading, writing and mathematics and a small sample of books was reviewed.

Context

An acting headteacher has led the school since the section 5 inspection and an executive headteacher is no longer in place. One member of the Interim Executive Board of governors has left and been replaced.

Main findings

Existing school plans have been revised and now include all of the areas for improvement from the recent inspection. You and your staff are working purposefully to improve teaching. You are wisely drawing upon the support of good and outstanding schools locally to assist this work. However, not all training is specific about timescales and the intended impact on pupils' learning. Where it is effective, coaching and individual support are enabling some staff to develop their subject knowledge. This is starting to have an impact in mathematics because teachers are carefully adjusting the work given to pupils to provide more challenge. As a result there is a greater focus on pupils developing the skills to investigate and understand their work. Pupils are rising to this challenge. They are keen to explain the strategies they used to solve problems and in doing so demonstrate a sound use of mathematical facts.

The school has reorganised the teaching of reading. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are aware of the importance of reading regularly each week and are keen to do so. All pupils say that they enjoy being able to discuss their reading. They say discussion makes them think more deeply. Pupils writing books show their story plots and character descriptions are becoming more adventurous. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are beginning to make swifter progress in response to actions to improve the quality of teaching.

A start has been made to enable subject leaders to take a more active role in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders' checks on pupils' books, their work in lessons, and analysis of achievement data do not focus adequately on identifying strengths and weaknesses. Consequently the draft improvement plans prepared for reading, writing and mathematics do not identify subject priorities and actions sharply enough to ensure that the most able pupils are always appropriately challenged and supported.

Governors are taking action to secure permanent leadership of the school. The process of appointing a permanent headteacher for September 2015 is underway. Plans for the transition from the present governance arrangements to a full governing body for December 2015 are well in hand. A high level of expertise resides in the current Interim Executive Board of governors, however, plans do not

always have clear measures to help governors to gauge whether the actions being taken are making a difference to pupils' learning and achievement.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection. In discussion with HMI school leaders agreed to attend an Ofsted seminar later this term.

External support

The local authority has drawn up a detailed plan to support the school and to hold leaders accountable for developing and improving classroom practice. A planned review of the school is due to take place in the next two months. Partnerships are being forged with good and outstanding schools in the Craven and Skipton Teaching Alliance and the Harrogate and Rural Schools Alliance. Ings Primary School are starting to draw upon this support: planned training to develop teachers understanding of strategies to support mathematics has begun. Governors are working closely with local authority governance and personal services to implement their plans to establish secure leadership for the school.

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