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Mr Andrew Wilcock
Headteacher Designate
Carrwood Primary School
Eversley Drive
Holme Wood
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD4 0EQ

Dear Mr Wilcock

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Carrwood Primary School, Bradford

Following my visit to your school on 12 March 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 November 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- support the embryonic governing body to take a full role in checking the work of the school and holding leaders to account
- focus the work of middle leaders on checking the effectiveness of their actions and evaluating the difference initiatives are making to pupils' learning
- sharpen the actions, criteria, milestones and evaluation in the school's improvement plan particularly for aspects of teaching and leadership.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and your senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated school improvement plan. You accompanied me on a tour of the school and we visited classrooms to look at pupils' learning during which a small selection of pupils' books was scrutinised. I looked at a

range of documents, including records of the school's monitoring activities, a review of pupil premium funding and minutes of governing body meetings.

Context

Since the inspection there have been significant changes to the leadership of the school. The role of the executive headteacher ceased in February 2015. The school has appointed a new (designate) headteacher, who takes up post at the start of the summer term. His current school have given him some time to work in Carrwood School.

Since the inspection, almost all governors have resigned, with the exception of staff governors and one parent governor. The term of office for the parent governor has come to an end and the school has co-opted him as the new Chair of the Governing Body. The governing body has been reconstituted and the local authority has secured the services of two further governors who will begin shortly.

There have been no changes in teaching staff, however a temporary teacher continues to cover one class. The school is advertising this post and a temporary post to cover a period of maternity leave. As yet, it has not been able to recruit successfully for these posts.

Main findings

Significant changes in the leadership and governance at the school have hampered initial actions to address the issues raised by the inspection. Nonetheless, under the direction of the new headteacher, there is increasing clarity about what needs to be done and an increasing focus on the need to see the impact of improvements. There have been some effective transition arrangements which have enabled the headteacher designate to work in the school a few days each week to focus leaders more clearly on the priorities for school improvement.

Middle leaders have worked with external consultants and, under the direction of the new headteacher, are more involved with the discussions around school improvement. However, they accept that they have not 'got going' as quickly as they wanted to. For example, a small sample of the work in pupils' books shows teachers are conscientious in marking pupils' work but, the difference this is making to pupils' progress is less evident. This is because the leaders' checks and the feedback teachers' receive do not focus enough on the difference teachers' marking is making to pupils' progress. Where improvements are needed, these are not followed up effectively.

Although external reports indicate that some aspects of early years' provision, particularly in the nursery, have improved, there is still further to go in developing the role of adults to get the most from children's play.

The school's improvement plan contains clear criteria and milestones to help leaders and governors check on pupils' progress. However, milestones and criteria for other aspects of the plan, in particular improvements to teaching and leadership, are much weaker. Consequently, middle leaders and governors are unclear about what is expected and what will be achieved at certain points on the school's journey to 'good'.

A review of the use of pupil premium funding has identified the positive impact of funding on pupils' behaviour and attitudes, but has raised questions about the impact on pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. Although there are initiatives to support pupils, there is further work needed to evaluate the impact of these interventions on pupils' progress.

Governor resignations and a number of cancelled meetings have meant that, there has been no capacity to carry out any checks on the work of the school. However, with the support of the local authority, the remaining governors have reconstituted the governing body. The new governing body is embryonic and the new Chair of Governors is currently the only non-staff governor. Nevertheless, he is committed to the school community and is working with the local authority to fill the remaining vacancies so the work of the governors can begin in earnest. Although a review of the effectiveness of the governing body has not been carried out, the school intends to carry out a review of the governing body, despite these changes, once the new governing body has been established.

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

Support from external consultants has enabled the school to support and improve some of the weaker teaching and address some of the issues in the provision for pupils in the early years. In February, a review of the school's effectiveness confirmed the areas that need to be developed and have raised questions that need to be examined further. However, the extent to which these have been followed up and resulted in effective action has been hampered during the period of change in leadership.

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

Yours sincerely

Adrian Guy
Her Majesty's Inspector