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30 April 2015

Mrs Jacquie Hall
Headteacher
Berry Brow Infant and Nursery School
Birch Road
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire
HD4 7LP

Dear Mrs Hall

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Berry Brow Infant and Nursery School, Kirklees

Following my visit to your school on 29 April 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.

The school is taking effective action to address the areas for improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure sufficient detail is included in school action plans about intended future improvement activities
- establish a partnership with a good or outstanding school to help contribute to an accurate view of the school's own strengths and weaknesses.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, middle leaders, governors, school support staff and a representative of the local authority. A range of documentation was evaluated including the school improvement plan, data tracking pupils' progress and a selection of work in pupil's books. In addition a tour of the school was undertaken.

Context

Since the last inspection, one member of teaching staff has left the school and a new member of teaching staff has started. A further appointment of an additional new teacher has taken place and she is due to take up post in September 2015. The governing body has been reconstituted. Three governors have left the governing body.

Main findings

The headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and teaching staff, although disappointed by the Requires Improvement judgement at the last inspection, have set about meeting the challenges to improve the school with energy, enthusiasm and urgency. They, along with governors and teaching assistants have lost little time in getting on with the job in hand and established a shared determination to make the improvements needed.

Evidence seen in the school shows that pupils are increasingly making the progress expected of them and an increasing proportion are making accelerated progress, especially in reading and writing. This is because systems have been put in place to hold teachers more directly to account for the progress pupils' are making, pupil's individual needs are more readily identified and interventions have been put in place in a more timely and focussed manner. In addition, systems to ensure that agreed approaches are implemented quickly and consistently have been strengthened. For example, the scrutiny of pupil's books, shared pupil progress meetings and regular reviews of teaching have supported the introduction of a new approach to how calculation is taught. Also, a new marking policy to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work.

The deployment of teaching assistants has been reviewed and improved. Teaching assistants now support a suitable range of groups and individual pupils. Also, teaching assistants contribute to planning lessons and assessments of pupil's learning. As a result, they have a clear understanding of their roles in supporting learners and feel well supported in developing their own skills and knowledge.

Middle and senior leaders play a key part in improving outcomes for pupils and play an active and visible role in driving the school forward. They have a clear understanding of their roles and the expectations that go with them. They play an

increased role in scrutinising pupils' work and discussing the progress individual pupils are making with other teachers. They have improved their subject knowledge through access to training both in and outside the school. This means they are better able to support their colleagues and identify aspects of practice that needs to improve further.

The school's 'Getting back to good plan' provides a clear framework for improvement. Actions, timelines and intended outcomes are clear. This means that governors are able to track what has been done in the school, ask more challenging questions and have better information by which to judge the impact of actions. The school acknowledges that further detail is needed about intended actions beyond the end of the 2014/15 school year. In addition, greater clarity is required about how the progress of pupils will be reported against new curriculum requirements.

Governors know the school well and increasingly hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account. This is because they have undertaken a review of their own effectiveness and taken actions to address aspects that needed strengthening. The governing body is now smaller, has sharpened its practice and governors have redefined their roles and working practices. They meet more regularly, record and revisit challenges they have made and follow up with clearly focussed visits to the school. For example, a review of how additional funding for pupils' at risk of under achieving has been followed up by the governor now responsible for pupil premium spending. As a result, governors have a much sharper view about how well these pupils are progressing.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

Local authority support is well targeted and timely. The school has been identified for extra visits by the Kirklees Learning Partner. He knows the school well and has contributed to a recent review of provision across the school. The local authority has provided additional support including an audit of Early Years Foundation Stage provision and input from a mathematics consultant.

Work with other good and outstanding schools from which school leaders may learn from best practice is underdeveloped. Some partnership work to ensure the accuracy of teacher's assessments in mathematics and writing has taken place.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Brown

Her Majesty's Inspector