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Mrs Alison Spencer
Headteacher
The Brigg Infant School
39 South Street
South Normanton
Alfreton
DE55 2DA

Dear Mrs Spencer

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Brigg Infant School

Following my visit to your school on 19 May 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 January 2015. 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.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you to discuss the actions you have taken since the last inspection. We toured the school together and looked at a sample of pupils' books in each classroom. I was accompanied on a second tour by two Year 2 pupils and a teaching assistant. I met with four representatives of the governing body, including the Chair of Governors. I evaluated the school's post Ofsted action plan and self-evaluation document. A representative of Derbyshire local authority visited the school to meet with me. Two middle leaders and the acting deputy headteacher met with me to discuss improvements in the quality of teaching, assessment and leadership and management.

Context

One teacher, who was also the special educational needs co-ordinator, left the school at Easter. You are in the process of appointing a permanent deputy headteacher. Middle leadership responsibilities have been reorganised and there are now teams of staff working on the priority areas of: early years, reading, writing, phonics, mathematics, computing and science.

Main findings

You and the school's leaders are responding effectively to the areas for improvement that were identified at the last inspection. Your self-evaluation is now accurate and this has allowed you to write an action plan which contains appropriate priorities and clear success criteria.

The pupil assessment process has been refined to ensure that teachers' judgements are accurate. Teachers and teaching assistants have undertaken training to develop their skills in measuring the attainment of the pupils. Teachers reported to me that they are now more confident in this area of their work.

You and your acting deputy headteacher have changed the way in which teachers and teaching assistants are leading areas of the school's work. There are now teams of staff, rather than individuals, who have responsibility for improving the achievement of pupils across the school. You have sent teachers to visit schools with outstanding practice and on training in order to promote improved levels of pupil achievement. This has allowed middle leaders to improve their knowledge of how skills and knowledge are taught across the school.

Teachers have worked together to agree on the features of good teaching. The list of these features is now displayed in classrooms. Since the last inspection you have sharpened teachers' targets to make sure they are linked to the school's priorities. This work has resulted in all staff being clear about how they can improve the quality of their teaching.

Since the last inspection the outdoor area for the youngest children has been improved and now contains better resources and opportunities for pupils to develop their learning. You have also been able to lease a piece of land next to the school. These two areas allow improved opportunities for pupils to learn outside.

You have carefully considered your approach to improving the teaching of phonics across the school. You and your staff team have started to provide a more consistent approach to this daily teaching activity. In the Autumn term you will be implementing a new scheme to support teachers and teaching assistants with the teaching of phonics. Pupil achievement in this area is starting to improve.

You have worked with teachers to make their planning better. Teachers now plan specific work for the most-able pupils. Clear success criteria for all pupils are displayed in each Year 1 and Year 2 classroom in the form of 'success spiders'. Pupils are responding well to this approach. As a result of this work pupils are developing their skills of self-assessment.

The marking of pupils work has improved considerably since the last inspection. You have developed a marking policy which has clear guidelines for all staff. Pupils told me that they like the new way of marking and that it makes sense to them.

Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. You provide them with detailed reports and they are regular visitors to school. They are supportive of you and are positive about your recent work to improve the school. Governors have rightly identified the need to improve the security of the school site.

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

The school's leaders have been supported effectively by staff from the local authority. The school is now designated as a priority school and benefits from regular visits from a school improvement advisor and a teaching and learning consultant. The local authority has also organised for you to have a link with an early years leading teacher.

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

Yours sincerely

Phil Harrison
Her Majesty's Inspector