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Miss Michelle Walton
Headteacher
Conisbrough Balby Street Primary School
Craggs Road
Denaby Main
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN12 4DX

Dear Miss Walton

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Coinsbrough Balby Street Primary School, Doncaster

Following my visit to your school on 2 July 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 March 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and the Interim Executive Board (IEB) 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 sufficient detail is included in school action plans about current and future improvement activities
- engage further with parents to ensure that their views are captured and better inform school improvement priorities
- ensure all senior leaders, staff and the Interim Executive Board have a shared understanding of what effective teaching and learning looks like in lessons, pupils' work and the progress that pupils can be expected to make.

Evidence

During the inspection, discussions took place with the headteacher, the associate headteacher, other senior leaders, teachers, teaching assistants, pupils, a member of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) who have responsibility for the governance of the school and a representative of the local authority. A range of documentation was evaluated including the school action plan, outcomes from work scrutiny and of other monitoring activities such as lesson observations. A brief visit was made to all classrooms.

Context

Since the last inspection the executive headteacher arrangements have been replaced with an associate headteacher who is an LLE (Local Leader of Education) from a good school, supporting the headteacher.

Main findings

The headteacher, associate headteacher and senior leaders have worked hard to improve the school at an increased rate since the last inspection. Actions taken before the last inspection have been reviewed, refined and built on. In addition, senior leaders have worked more closely together, defined their roles more clearly and have introduced greater rigour to monitoring processes. The data used by senior leaders and staff has been sharpened and has greater clarity. This is leading to sharper focussed support for pupils and a greater accountability for all staff for the progress that pupils are making.

Actions to improve classroom practice have rightly been prioritised. These include new systems to provide pupils with detailed feedback and opportunities for dealing with misconceptions. For example, pupils review their own understanding of the work they have been doing using a colour coded tray system. Work is immediately analysed by staff and any misconceptions identified. Learning support assistants then ensure a rapid response to provide additional input where needed. As a result, pupils are much clearer about what they need to do to improve their work and receive timely targeted support to do so. In addition, a range of other actions have been taken including extending good early years practice into Year 1, improvements in the physical learning environment and 'countdown' challenges at the start of each day. Consequently, the progress pupils are making is increasingly evident in their work. They have a better attitude to their learning and behaviour in lessons and around the school is improving.

The school improvement plan has clear outcomes based on the quality of teaching school leaders want to see, and the rates of accelerated progress that all groups of pupils are expected to make. It reflects the priorities identified at the time of the last inspection and has a strong focus on improving teaching and learning. Time lines are

clear and review dates have been established along with interim measures by which school leaders can check that they are on course to improve at a sufficient rate. However, the plan does not give a clear picture of proposed actions and some actions that have already been undertaken are not captured in sufficient detail. This makes it difficult for members of the Interim Executive Board to monitor precisely the actions being taken and understand the impact they are having.

The Interim Executive Board have been robust in their challenge to school leaders. Regular meetings every two weeks are driven by reports and evaluations on key actions and outcomes based on the rate of progress pupils are making. Where actions have been clearly identified in action plans they have ensured that timelines have been kept to and outcomes evaluated thoroughly. The IEB is aware of additional priorities that may hinder the progress of the school. For example, they are aware that the views of parents are not being captured effectively and that this requires a sharper focus to ensure parents have greater confidence in the school.

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 support provided by the associate headteacher has played a vital role in ensuring the school has progressed rapidly. She has established, along with the headteacher, greater capacity in the senior leadership team to improve the school. The support provided including that provided by other members of her staff and visits to her school, has helped staff, including learning support assistants, to learn from best practice.

The local authority provides appropriate levels of support and monitoring to ensure that the school is making progress. They make additional visits to the school to support school leaders and regularly attend IEB meetings.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Brown

Her Majesty's Inspector