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Mrs K Bradley
Foredyke Primary School
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Dear Mrs Bradley

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Foredyke Primary School.

Following my visit to your school on 11 December 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 June 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.

The school should take further action to:

- develop effective systems to monitor and improve attendance so that it is at least in line with national figures
- ensure that writing is prioritised as an area for improvement, so that handwriting skills and the quality of written work improves quickly
- ensure that decisions about the leadership structure of the school are made swiftly so that a permanent headteacher can be appointed.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with yourself, middle leaders, the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. We visited classrooms and scrutinised comprehension, writing and mathematics books. I also analysed a variety of

documents, including the school improvement plan, monitoring files and evidence from external monitoring visits.

Context

Since the last inspection the governors have changed the leadership structure and there is no longer an executive headteacher working at the school. A new temporary headteacher has joined the school for a period of one year and the role of deputy headteacher is now being carried out by the previous head of school. Two new teachers were appointed in September, one of whom has since left the school. The new school building is on track to be completed by April 2015.

Main findings

The new temporary headteacher is determined in her efforts to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. She has carried out a full evaluation of what needs to be done and is quickly putting her plans into action. In the short time she has been at the school, significant improvements are already evident.

The impact of work to improve standards in reading is apparent throughout the school. The headteacher and middle leaders have analysed sample test papers, and used this information to create specific criteria for teachers to follow when planning comprehension work. Pupils are given work at appropriate levels and are enthusiastic about reading. Guided reading books show that pupils are tackling higher-order reading skills with activities that are at the correct level of challenge for individuals. Teachers know what is expected for each year group and therefore match the work appropriately. Books are monitored closely by leaders who now have a more accurate picture of age-related expectations.

In mathematics, there is a more consistent approach to the teaching of the new curriculum and mathematical skills. The use of professional development has supported teachers to help them improve their own knowledge and to have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. Evidence from books shows that pupils are working at the right level and there is some evidence that challenges are being set which deepen thinking. However, the provision of work which challenges more-able pupils is generally underdeveloped and is not consistent throughout the school.

Pupils' improved behaviours for learning are now embedded and this is evident when visiting classrooms. Pupils are engaged in their learning, on task and well supported both by teaching assistants and teachers. The tighter lesson structure and an increase in pace are contributing to the improvements in behaviour, and teachers themselves recognise this positive change. The new headteacher has given a clear message to everyone that poor behaviour will not be tolerated and has used fixed-term exclusions to ensure that behaviour improves.

Marking is beginning to help the pupils to improve their work. Teachers are now using the new system and are marking against key criteria. This is allowing teachers to assess pupils' understanding more accurately.

The new headteacher has implemented an assessment system which is still in its early stages. She has matched key statements from the core curriculum to planning outcomes to ensure that teachers know what is expected at each age group. Realistic targets are reviewed at regular pupil progress meetings to ensure that pupils are on track. Leaders are aware that pupils need to make accelerated progress to catch up.

Senior leaders have carried out a thorough analysis of the disappointing 2015 national test results and accordingly have set priorities for improvement. To address the legacy of underachievement, the headteacher monitors the quality of work in pupils' books to ensure that it is at the right level. Extra catch-up programmes are being offered to pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Where teaching quality is graded less than good by the headteacher, support is quickly put into place to enable teachers to improve. Continued professional development is planned into staff meetings and training days and this is raising expectations.

Middle leaders speak positively about the changes made by the new headteacher and particularly value the opportunities to observe practice in good and outstanding schools. Both middle leaders now track and monitor standards in their subjects. The introduction of peer monitoring has been effective in providing support for teachers to improve. Any outcomes from analysis are fed back at staff meetings or to individual teachers where appropriate. The use of cross-moderation with other schools is also helping to raise expectations.

The headteacher has utilised daily assembly times to develop work on broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures and religions. Alongside this, the school are planning a whole month of activities based around British values.

Governors admit that they had taken their finger off the pulse due to more pressing issues at their other federated school. They are now visiting this school more regularly and have been involved in setting up systems to ensure that they can have greater confidence in the information given to them. However, while the governors decide the way forward for the federation, the school is undergoing a prolonged period of instability. This has resulted in two temporary arrangements for the headship position and governors need to decide urgently a permanent arrangement that is in the school's best interest in order for it to move on at a pace.

Following an external review of the use and impact of the pupil premium funding the school receives, a more detailed tracking system is now in place and pupils are identified clearly, which enables attainment and progress to be monitored.

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 local authority are ensuring that the new headteacher is well supported and are funding half a day per week of mentoring, as well as visiting regularly to carry out reviews and work with staff. The local authority acknowledge that the instability in leadership at the school is not in the best interests of the rapid turnaround needed.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for City of Kingston upon Hull. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Lunn
Her Majesty's Inspector