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Post-inspection note of visit letter – schools requiring improvement monitoring inspection visits

20 October 2015

Emma Breckenridge
Enfield Heights Academy
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Dear Miss Breckenridge

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Enfield Heights Academy

Following my visit to your school on 30 September 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 2014. 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 last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other leaders and members of staff, the executive headteacher, the Chair of the Rapid Improvement Board and another governor to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school's action plans were evaluated. Together, we made short visits to all classes and groups. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including information about pupils' achievement and your evaluation of the quality of teaching. The procedures for safeguarding and minutes from the rapid improvement board meetings were also considered.

Context

Since my previous visit in September 2014 you have taken on responsibility for another of the schools in Cuckoo Hall Academy Trust and are now headteacher of both schools. The deputy headteacher has relocated and you have appointed an assistant headteacher from within the existing staff team. You have made further appointments to support the school as it continues to expand.

Main findings

Following my last visit you revised your action plan to identify who was responsible for checking each part of the plan. You also included systems for evaluating how much progress you were making towards achieving your goals. You have now refined your planning further and this year's plan includes milestones so that governors can see on a termly basis whether the school is on track to meet its objectives, and what areas need further work. As a result, the pace of improvement in the school has increased.

The systems you set up in September 2014 to track pupils' progress are now embedded in practice and provide rich information about how each pupil is doing. Leaders work closely with teachers and support staff to analyse this information and plan teaching activities so that pupils move on quickly in their learning. Consequently, pupils in all year groups are making considerable progress and attain well. The accuracy of judgments made in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Year 2 were checked by external verifiers and found to be accurate. However, leaders have identified that further work needs to be done to ensure that sufficient evidence is gathered to support a judgment of 'exceeding expectations' for some of the early learning goals.

Similarly, the system you introduced to monitor the quality of teaching is now fully in place. You use a wide variety of evidence to inform your judgment on how effective teaching is. This ensures that any pockets of weaker practice are identified and eliminated through the provision of a strong support programme for staff. Leaders model good practice and provide very effective training for staff in this way.

Behaviour has continued to improve rapidly. Staff at all levels recognise the impact of this on the amount of progress made by pupils, who are now fully engaged in their learning. Together with senior leaders you have developed a strong sense of team spirit within the school. As a result, all staff buy into the school's vision and are fully supportive of your work.

In order to add breadth to the leadership team, you have strengthened links with the other school under your leadership. Middle leaders hold responsibilities across both schools, and work closely together to develop the curriculum, strengthen teaching and analyse information. A high level of consistency across the two schools

in terms of expectations, behaviour management strategies and staff development means that this work is very effective.

The rapid improvement board has met regularly to monitor improvements and check that the school achieves its objectives. Plans to reconstitute a local governing body are now well advanced. Members of the rapid improvement board support leaders effectively in their work to improve the school by offering challenge in meetings through asking pertinent questions. During a period of turbulence in the wider academy trust, a member of the rapid improvement board who is not a trustee stepped into the breach. He visited the school more often, met with you and ensured that any parental anxiety was allayed. This ensured that work to improve the school was not adversely affected.

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 executive headteacher works with you and other schools within the trust to ensure positive outcomes for pupils. As part of a wider community, specialist expertise is brought in to support the school as required. Members of staff have opportunities for professional development across the academy trust, within the school or externally as appropriate. Leaders seek verification of their work through the commissioning of external consultants. They respond positively to feedback and adapt their systems in order to improve further.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the rapid improvement board and the Director of Children's Services for Enfield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Gaynor Roberts
Her Majesty's Inspector