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Mrs Carol Daly
Heanor Langley Infant School
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Derbyshire
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Dear Mrs Daly

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Heanor Langley Infant School.

Following my visit to your school on 1 October 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 April 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 in order to become a good school.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you and other leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement planning was evaluated. I visited lessons and observed learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. I spoke with a group of Key Stage 1 pupils about their learning.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection in April, there have been staffing changes and the leadership team has been restructured. An extensive building programme is taking place.

Main findings

You have managed widespread change since the section 5 inspection. You have worked to engage parents and the community, and relationships have improved as a result.

A comprehensive action plan is in place that addresses the areas identified in the section 5 inspection. This plan is cross-referenced with the local authority action plan in order that support to the school, including from a local teaching school, can be brokered in a cohesive way. The school plan is regularly reviewed to ensure that actions have been completed. We agreed that there is now an urgency to ensure that a more strategic approach is taken. Actions within the planning must link more directly to learning and pupils' progress, particularly within Key Stage 1. Leaders and the governing body need to be clear about the impact they want to see and how they will monitor this.

You have dealt with many staffing issues. The leadership team of the school has been restructured. You have revised the performance management systems within the school and there is now clarity for staff about how their individual performance targets contribute to improving the school. Leaders are now clear about their roles and responsibilities. Training for teachers has focused on whole-school priorities and teachers have benefited from the productive links you have with the Ladycross Teaching School. This has included, for example, pairing up with other teachers to observe practice, and reflection on how their teaching can improve. Members of the governing body have also been involved in this school-to-school support in order to improve their understanding of teaching and pupils' progress.

Leaders new to their role have a great deal of potential and would benefit from further leadership development and guidance so that they can work effectively to drive improvement. The local authority representative agreed that this support could be provided.

There has been a great deal of effort to improve the learning environment within the school and your passion to make sure that displays 'should enhance learning' is evident. We saw learning walls being used well. There is far more consistency. You have established the expectations for handwriting and provided good models of this for the pupils to learn from. The curriculum has been reviewed and you have consulted pupils about the things they would enjoy studying.

You are keen to further improve writing across the curriculum and foster an investigative approach to learning. You understand that pupils need to know what they are learning and why, and that this is an area to improve.

You are introducing a new tracking system, and leaders at all levels have a greater understanding of how to use the data. You are conducting pupil progress meetings so that underachievement can be identified and appropriate intervention put in place. We discussed the ways in which class teachers can more effectively use this information when planning learning.

The governing body continues to provide effective support and challenge to the school. They regularly monitor progress against action points. They have a clear understanding of where the school is improving. The Chair of the Governing Body is able to challenge leaders and is keen to make sure that governors focus on the key actions that will have the most impact. The governing body has worked to improve their knowledge and skills so that they can carry out their roles effectively.

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

I discussed with you, your Chair of the Governing Body and the local authority representative, the importance of evaluating the impact of external support. The teaching school has provided a wealth of opportunities for professional development, including leadership support and opportunities for teachers to observe practice. The local authority has supported these productive links. Leaders must now ensure that support to the school is focused directly on ensuring that learning and pupils' progress continue to improve.

The local authority have worked to ensure a cohesive approach to planning for improvement and external support. The local authority's role in ensuring effective support to the school is vital.

This letter will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Derbyshire local authority.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman
Her Majesty's Inspector