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Kristina Frary
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Dear Mrs Frary

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kingsway Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 13 May 2016, 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 September 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its section 5 inspection before the one that took place in September 2015, the school was also judged to require improvement.

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.

The school should take further action to:

- Ensure the accuracy of assessments of what pupils know and can do on entry to early years and at each stage through the school, particularly in reading.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the deputy headteacher, senior leaders responsible for English, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. You accompanied me on a walk around the school, visiting lessons and looking at pupils' books.

Context

Kingsway School has gone through much change since the time of the inspection. The previous headteacher left the school in December 2015. You took up post as acting executive headteacher in February 2016, working in school three days per week. Plans are in place to appoint a permanent full-time headteacher later this month. The leader for English took up a promotion with an academy trust and was replaced by a new English leader from within school in January 2016. Her role as class teacher was filled by a newly qualified teacher. Two teachers in early years left the school and have been succeeded by two experienced teachers, new to the school.

Main findings

Your leadership is having a big impact on staff morale. You are adept at building a sense of team, valuing the contributions of all staff and encouraging all to develop their skills. The deputy headteacher is skilled in analysing pupil data and distilling the information so that changes can be made as a result of findings. New leaders of English and mathematics have brought energy and enthusiasm to their roles. They are now effectively measuring the impact of teaching on learning. The strong desire of leaders, staff and governors to drive change is leading to a much more cohesive team working towards improved outcomes for pupils.

The governing body is extremely keen to turn things around for Kingsway pupils. Governors have continued to support the school through challenging times. Governors are highly involved in ensuring that the right actions are being taken by leaders, so that pupils make stronger progress. They have been regular visitors to the school, challenging school leaders continually to improve the education provided for pupils.

Leaders have taken quick action to secure accurate information about the effectiveness of the school and the impact of actions on pupils' attainment. Leaders are tracking cohorts, classes and groups of pupils. They are regularly holding conversations with staff about the progress of individual pupils. This information is showing greater consistency in the quality of teaching, leading to some early signs that pupils are making better progress. This is particularly the case in key stage 1, where the majority of pupils are working at levels expected for their age in reading,

writing and mathematics. Outcomes for pupils are stronger in mathematics in key stage 2. However, insufficient numbers of pupils in key stage 2 are working at expected levels in reading and writing.

Leaders have initiated much change to the way reading is taught in school. New resources have strengthened the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make). Pupils in the early years and key stage 1 are now better prepared to read and write.

Leaders and teachers have worked effectively to ensure pupils have a better understanding of the texts they are reading. The consistent use of agreed assessment and planning formats is helping teachers to identify more accurately what it is that pupils need to learn. As a result of support offered by middle leaders, teachers have improved their subject knowledge and are better equipped to teach reading. Work in books shows pupils are exploring and responding to challenging texts. It is clear that assessment is influencing discussions taking place between teachers and pupils during reading lessons. However, teachers are erring on the side of caution when assessing pupils' progress, sometimes underestimating what pupils can do.

The learning environment in the early years is bright and inviting and is much improved since the last inspection. Leaders are still in the process of securing accurate assessment. This is because previous assessment was not underpinned by clear evidence of what children knew and could do. Current assessment suggests that very few children arrive at school with skills typical for their age in reading and writing, although their skills are better developed in number. Leaders have still to ensure that current assessment is wholly accurate so that expectations of what children can achieve are not too low. Assessments show that children are making progress but they will need to make more rapid progress in order to be well prepared for learning in Year 1.

External support

The school has been well supported by the local authority. Meetings have been held with school leaders to discuss actions to improve the school. Officers have visited the school on two occasions to undertake a review of teaching and learning, supporting leaders in checking the school's progress. The local authority school improvement adviser has worked effectively to ensure that all subject leaders are well equipped to carry out their roles in evaluating and developing teaching.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for the East Riding of Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Butcher
Her Majesty's Inspector