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Mr A Perry
Interim Headteacher
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Dear Mr Perry

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Myton School

Following my visit to your school on 19 July 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 January 2016. 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.

The school should take further action to:

- evaluate the impact that the new curriculum has on improving the attendance and fixed-term exclusion rates of disadvantaged pupils, and so inform future strategic developments.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, senior and other leaders and with the chair and two other members of the governing body. I spoke to the school improvement partner by telephone. I undertook brief visits to a number of lessons, accompanied by members of the senior leadership team and heads of department, where I looked at examples of pupils' work and talked to them about their learning. I evaluated a range of documents and records, including analysis of pupils' outcomes

and external reviews of the use of pupil premium funding, and of the work of the governing body.

Context

Since the previous inspection, you have been appointed as interim headteacher. You have restructured the roles and responsibilities of some members of the senior leadership team and appointed an additional assistant headteacher with responsibility for the pupil premium. The school has commissioned support from an external school improvement partner and made informal links with several schools. The governors are seeking to appoint a permanent head of school to start during, or at the end of, the next academic year, but have not yet found the right candidate, despite their best efforts.

Main findings

You and your team have quickly and decisively made plans to tackle the areas identified at the section 5 inspection that require improvement. A clear vision for the school has been created and shared with staff. Staff are supportive of the direction in which you are leading the school and feel involved in the changes that are being made. A good school improvement plan has been written that focuses on what needs to happen. The role that governors and the school improvement partner have in monitoring the progress of the school is incorporated into the plan. You and other senior leaders regularly update the school improvement plan to evaluate progress.

Senior leaders clearly identify the precise actions that they and other staff need to take. Their clarity and purpose enable them to hold other staff more to account. You have encouraged an outward-looking culture among senior leaders. They use published research and make links with other schools in order to seek out examples of outstanding practice, which they use to inform their decisions and practice.

You have appointed an additional senior leader to focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. This strategic decision has increased the priority that all staff place on this group of pupils. It contributes to your mission that 'no child should be left behind'. The new senior leader has begun to take action on many of the aspects identified through the external review regarding the use of the pupil premium. A comprehensive tracking system records the interventions used to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders can now systematically review and evaluate the impact of these interventions. Teachers are mindful of their role in supporting disadvantaged pupils in the classroom and their work is monitored through regular lesson observations, learning walks and analysis of pupils' performance. School information demonstrates that the gaps between outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are narrowing. This is more evident for pupils lower down the school than for pupils currently in Year 11.

Leaders and governors have planned structural changes to the curriculum for September, including the introduction of a curriculum to focus on literacy and numeracy skills for some pupils. These changes are designed to tackle the relatively high rates of fixed-term exclusions and to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.

Senior leaders now present information about pupils' performance in a more useful way, increasing its value to middle leaders and governors. Middle leaders can more readily identify when key groups of pupils are not making the progress expected of them. They hold teachers in their departments to account and offer support as required. Senior leaders ensure the leadership skills of middle leaders are developing well, so that heads of department are able to carry out their roles more effectively. For example, they can confidently monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through lesson observations and learning walks. Governors are developing a more detailed understanding of the progress of different groups of pupils and are increasingly asking more probing questions of leaders.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have established a culture of reading in the school. Pupils and staff spend time reading together each day. Pupils know their reading ages as a result of comprehensive reading tests. They use this information to select books which are appropriate to them. The number of books that pupils borrow from the learning resource centre has sharply increased and pupils talk about their enjoyment of, and enthusiasm for, reading.

Leaders use information about pupils' reading ages to ensure effective interventions take place for those who require additional support. Regular progress checks demonstrate that the reading ages of many of these pupils have increased as a result of the extra focus on their reading skills, especially for younger pupils. Teachers recognise that literacy is important and a high priority in the school. They regularly plan activities to ensure that pupils' literacy skills are developed, and provide feedback to pupils on their progress.

Teachers in mathematics plan good learning opportunities to develop pupils' problem-solving skills. They pitch tasks at different levels of difficulty for pupils of different abilities, and so provide appropriate challenge for all pupils. In my short visits to lessons, I saw pupils engage well and enjoy these activities. They were able to talk confidently to me about the skills and mathematical knowledge they were using to solve problems. Pupils build on primary school learning by using an approach to problem solving that they have already developed. Pupils' increased mathematical confidence and security in skills have increased rates of progress in mathematics, but improvements are less marked than those in English.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

Governors have commissioned highly effective external support from an independent school improvement partner. The work has supported leaders' development of an action plan, in response to the previous inspection, which includes clear targets and deadlines for their achievement. This allows leaders and governors to closely monitor progress towards objectives. The school improvement partner has worked to develop the skills and expertise of middle leaders. Middle leaders are now developing ways to demonstrate and evaluate the impact of the actions they are taking. Governors have responded well to ongoing training provided by the school improvement partner. They are developing skills to interpret key school performance information and more effectively hold leaders to account. Additional training has been planned.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Rob Hackfath
Her Majesty's Inspector