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Debbie Weaver
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Weaver

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Cantrell Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 10 May 2017, 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 2017. 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, meetings were held with the headteacher, the mathematics and assessment coordinators, members of staff responsible for attendance and members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I made a series of visits to classrooms, which included talking with the pupils and looking at their work. I met separately with a group of pupils. I looked at the school's improvement plans, at records of monitoring activities carried out by leaders and governors, at safeguarding records, and other documents available on

the school's website.

Main findings

The school has been revitalised and re-energised in the wake of the recent inspection. You, the senior leaders and the governing body drew up sensible plans very quickly to deal specifically with the areas for improvement identified by the inspection. You have put the plans into action swiftly. The pace of improvement at the school has increased as a result of more-focused and purposeful leadership by you, the leadership team and the governing body. You have secured good access to, and make effective use of, relevant external support, which is helping you to make the necessary changes.

The roles and responsibilities of leaders have been clarified and are understood clearly by the persons holding them. Consequently, the leaders are able to make a better contribution to improving the school than they were previously.

The external review of governance was completed rapidly. It has led to better ways of working. The governing body is now well informed about the quality of the school's work. It is helped by clearer and more-detailed reports from the school's leaders and by a programme of activities carried out by members of the governing body in conjunction with the school's leaders. Those things have enabled the governing body to ask more questions, be more challenging about what it is told and so to be more influential. Its work has contributed well to increasing the pace of improvement at the school.

A sense of accountability now pervades the school. The leaders and the staff take part in more-frequent and meaningful discussion than before about the pupils' progress. The latest information held by the school indicates that the pupils are making much better progress currently than was the case last year. The school is looking more closely now at the information about the pupils' progress, so that it is able to judge more accurately how well it is doing. The leaders are making more use of the information as a prompt for further action.

The teachers are making greater use of the information about the pupils' progress to set work for the pupils that meets the pupils' learning needs. The most able pupils spoke with me about how they found the work and the questions that the teachers ask them challenging, but not too difficult. In lessons, I saw the staff routinely asking the pupils probing questions, pressing the pupils to explain their reasoning and asking supplementary questions to extend the pupils' learning, or to raise the level of challenge.

The pupils' books that I saw showed that the teachers are putting the school's policy on marking and feedback into practice. The books contained examples of work that showed that the pupils' responses to the feedback enabled them to correct errors and to take on board the intended learning. The most able pupils told

me that they find the process helpful and explained how it helped them to have a good understanding of the progress that they are making.

You have increased the frequency with which the pupils' attendance is monitored. The school follows up routinely on persistent absences, contacting the pupils' homes, working with parents, complying with local procedures when there are concerns that a pupil may be missing from education, and using sanctions when all other options have been exhausted. You and your colleagues can point to notable examples of individual successes in increasing the attendance of pupils who have not previously attended well; typically, pupils' attendance improves when you take action. You have yet to secure the improvement in attendance overall, called for by the inspectors at the last inspection, and, at the time of my visit, attendance was a little lower than the school's average last year.

External support

The local authority ensured that the external review of governance happened very quickly after the inspection. The review has been instrumental in improving the effectiveness of the governing body. You are finding the support of the school adviser helpful in their work to monitor the quality of education at the school. You take the initiative in identifying possible sources of support for the professional development of the staff. That has led to the members of staff receiving a good range of opportunities that they are able to use effectively to develop their practice.

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

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss
Her Majesty's Inspector