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Matthew Davidson
Belmont Community Primary School
Harrowby Lane
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Dear Mr Davidson

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Belmont Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12 June 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 October 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.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.

I visited all classrooms, looking at pupils' work and discussing it with them. I spoke with a group of pupils from key stage 2 and had lunch with a group of pupils from Year 1. I spoke with parents at the start of the day. I looked at a range of documents, including the school's action plans, a recent review of the use of pupil premium funding, and safeguarding documents.

Context

There have been no contextual changes to the school since the previous section 5 inspection.

Main findings

You, other senior leaders and the governing body have reacted swiftly to the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Your effective action plans are concise and contain relevant milestones and opportunities to check progress towards them. Leaders are therefore held to account for the actions they take.

You have ensured that meetings to discuss pupils' attainment and progress occur more frequently. Assessment information is analysed carefully and discussed with teachers, so that you can identify quickly any individual pupils who are falling behind and give them the help they need to catch up. The data you use shows that large proportions of pupils are on track to achieve age-related expectations and are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This detailed assessment information is shared frequently with the governing body.

You have been the subject leader for mathematics this academic year. You have ensured that staff have had a wide range of training, delivered by you and an outside consultant. You have worked closely with teachers on their mathematics planning and have moderated their assessment of pupils' work, both internally and with other local schools. Consequently, teachers have the necessary skills to teach the mathematics curriculum and are confident when making judgements about pupils' attainment.

You have introduced 'catch the bus' for teachers to identify quickly pupils' misconceptions in mathematics. Pupils I spoke with told me they like this because it gives them a chance to talk over their mistakes with an adult and to rectify errors swiftly. You acknowledge that teachers are not yet providing enough opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills.

The knowledgeable and well-trained English subject leader has introduced a whole-school system to improve standards in writing and increase the number of opportunities for pupils to write at length in other subjects. He has ensured that teachers have the necessary skills to teach spelling, punctuation and grammar, that pupils have a wider range of experiences about which to write, and that the curriculum includes specific opportunities for pupils to write. I saw some good examples of extended writing from Years 1, 2 and 6. The leader has also ensured that teachers' assessments of pupils' writing are accurate by organising moderation activities internally and with other schools in all year groups.

The governing body now meets more frequently to discuss the progress that pupils

are making and the progress of school development plans. Governors are visiting the school more regularly to conduct relevant monitoring visits. Findings are fed back to the governing body to decide if any further action needs to be taken. Minutes from meetings of the governing body show that governors ask questions of leaders about, for example, disadvantaged pupils' attendance and the progress they are making. The governing body is, therefore, holding you and other senior leaders fully to account for the actions you take.

Teachers have a performance management target to ensure that the most able pupils are making good progress. You have carried out lesson observations and checks on pupils' work to ensure that these pupils are achieving highly and are being suitably challenged. We agreed, however, that this is a target for further action because some of the most able pupils are not consistently being stretched and therefore are not achieving as well as they could.

You have set up an attendance group consisting of you, a learning mentor and a member of the office staff. You meet regularly to discuss the attendance of pupils and, in particular, of disadvantaged pupils. The learning mentor has become involved when a pupil's attendance becomes a cause for concern. This work has been effective. Consequently, there has been a sharp increase in the attendance of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, during this academic year.

You requested an external review of the school's use of the pupil premium but this was not completed until March 2017 because of the unavailability of a suitably qualified person to carry out the review. An effective action plan has been written to tackle the 10 recommendations and good progress has been made in a relatively short space of time. The reviewer is due back in October 2017 to assess the impact of your plan.

External support

You have received a good level of support from a representative of the local authority. Your action plans have been validated, as have your judgements on the quality of teaching, pupils' work and pupils' attainment and progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Stonier
Her Majesty's Inspector