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31 August 2017

Mrs Jacqui Newton and Mrs Sally Pearce  
Seely Primary School  
Perry Road  
Sherwood  
Nottingham  
Nottinghamshire  
NG5 3AE

Dear Mrs Newton and Mrs Pearce

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Seely Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 18 July 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 December 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its section 5 inspection before the one that took place in December 2016, 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 recent section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to ensure that:

- all improvement plans make clear who will monitor that actions have taken place and by what date
- teachers move pupils on to harder work as soon as they have demonstrated that they are ready for it
- all staff consistently apply the agreed school systems for marking and presentation.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the joint headteachers, other senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the action and improvement plans and undertook a scrutiny of pupils' work. I examined the recent external review of the school's use of the pupil premium. I also toured the school with you to see lessons taking place in different classes, met pupils and members of staff, and examined the school's records of safeguarding checks.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, there have been no significant changes.

## **Main findings**

As joint headteachers, you have demonstrated the necessary sense of urgency to attend to the areas of improvement identified at the last inspection. For example, following this inspection, you immediately commissioned a review of your spending of the pupil premium. This found that the individual programmes of support that disadvantaged pupils were receiving were not being evaluated for their effectiveness, and that some interventions were not proving good value for money. You quickly addressed these weaknesses. Plans are now in place which identify clearly how pupil premium funding will help disadvantaged pupils make better progress. These plans include details of how the impact of each programme of support will be evaluated.

You have increased the frequency of meetings to check pupils' progress. Teachers and teaching assistants attend these. The result is that all staff have a better understanding of how well pupils are learning. They also understand more fully the importance of all staff working together to secure progress that is at least good. They have received useful quality professional development to improve their skills, and have visited schools across Nottingham to learn from best practice.

The school's deputy headteachers are playing a considerably more effective role in helping their colleagues to accelerate the rate of progress pupils are making. One has now become a moderator of pupils' work for the local authority. This has helped assure the accuracy of staff's assessments at Seely.

The previous inspection asked you to improve the progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils. The information gained from more frequent and accurate checks on progress is helping you tackle this issue successfully. For example, the most able pupils now are tracked closely to ensure that they are making good progress from their higher starting points. However, pupils told me that they sometimes have to complete work that is too easy for them before tackling suitably challenging tasks.

The impact of support provided for disadvantaged pupils is now scrutinised much more closely. Staff evaluate the value of any additional support by checking the difference each intervention has made. As senior leaders, you quickly adjust or discontinue any support that is proving ineffective. You are passing on information about the effectiveness of different initiatives to the governing body. As a result, governors are much better informed on the value for money of pupil premium spending. This means that they are able to hold you and your staff to account when pupils are not making enough gains. My scrutiny of work indicated that disadvantaged pupils are being increasingly well supported.

The quality of teaching and learning is rising. You are providing appropriate support for teachers who are not yet consistently effective. I observed teaching in almost all year groups in the school. Pupils were settled, working well and listening to the questions or instructions that staff were giving them. It was a positive picture.

Pupils say that, most of the time, staff give them useful advice on how to improve their work. Their workbooks show that, in the majority of instances, pupils' work is increasingly well presented and staff follow the school's marking policy. However, in a few instances, staff do not challenge poor presentation or check that pupils have taken note of the feedback they have received.

The school's action plans are stronger than at the time of the last inspection. They place sufficient emphasis on the progress of key groups. They now contain detail of the precise actions you are planning to drive up the quality of teaching. The dates for the actions in your plans are specific and clear. You have also included, in most cases, sharp criteria for success. However, these plans are not fully effective because they do not consistently spell out who will monitor that these actions have occurred, or when they will do this. As a result, it is not always easy for the governing body to know when to check that things have been done, or who to hold responsible.

School information shows that, as a result of better teaching, the great majority of pupils across the school are now making at least the progress they should. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is also beginning to rise because of the better quality of the support they are receiving. As a result, pupils' overall attainment has risen considerably this year in all key stages. The indications are that this increase is greater than that seen nationally. Provisional data for 2017 indicates that, in the early years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is now above the current national average. In key stage 1, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check has increased. It is now approaching the current national average. The proportion of pupils at the end of Year 2 attaining the expected standard is up by a third in mathematics and has nearly doubled in writing. In reading, it is now exceeding the national average. The proportions attaining a greater depth of understanding in all subjects have also risen.

There are similarly encouraging signs of improvement at the end of key stage 2. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard is above average. In reading, it is in line with the national average. Writing is the weakest area. The proportion of pupils with the expected skills in writing is a little below average.

### **External support**

The local authority has supported the school effectively since the previous inspection. Its officer has assisted leaders with work on action planning, analysing pupils' performance information and quality assuring teaching. In addition, he has helped to broker support from a national leader of education to help staff improve their work. The adviser is fully committed to ensuring that appropriate support from the local authority continues so that the school becomes good as quickly as possible.

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

Roary Pownall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**