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Simon Dix
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Dear Mr Dix

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hollywood Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 11 June 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring 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 monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and took place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to improve:

- outcomes in writing
- the progress made by pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities
- progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, other leaders, three governors, including the chair, and an adviser from the organisation commissioned by the local authority to support the school. The focus of the meetings was to assess the impact of actions taken since the last inspection.

You and I made short visits to every classroom. A range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and minutes of meetings of the governing body, were considered. The post-Ofsted action plan was evaluated and the single central record was checked.

Context

Since the last inspection, three governors have joined the governing body, including the chair, and three governors have left. The previous chair has remained as a member of the governing body. Four teachers are currently on leave and their responsibilities are being covered internally and by two members of staff on short-term contracts. Three teaching assistants have left the school.

Main findings

Leaders and managers are using their clear understanding of the quality of the school to improve provision. Strengths identified at the time of the last inspection have been built on and effective action has been taken to address the areas for improvement.

Leaders' plans to tackle weaknesses identified in the previous Ofsted report have helped to improve the school. Relevant, clear and specific actions, set within an appropriate time frame, have had a positive impact on the quality of education provided.

As a result of improved teaching, most pupils are making better progress in a range of subjects. Leaders have ensured that accurate assessment is used effectively by teachers to plan challenging tasks for pupils. Consequently, different groups of pupils, including the most able, are making improved progress. Staff now have a clearer understanding of pupils' starting points and the areas that they need to improve.

Staff are benefiting from good-quality professional development. The well-honed teaching skills of senior leaders are being used more effectively to support teachers to develop their practice. Leaders model and monitor coaching to help staff to improve their teaching.

Leaders have taken effective action to strengthen the teaching of reading across the school. Pupils are now given more opportunities to build on their phonic skills in order to develop their levels of comprehension. The school library is well resourced and pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. Consequently, outcomes in reading have improved since the last inspection.

In 2017, the most able pupils in Year 6 attained above the national average for high-prior-attaining pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Middle-prior-attaining pupils also achieved above the national average for similar pupils in mathematics. Although the difference in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils got smaller, the attainment gap remained. This is because disadvantaged

pupils made slower progress in reading and mathematics, and much slower progress in writing, than other pupils nationally.

Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities made slower progress than other pupils with similar starting points in 2017. Action that is currently taking place is leading to improvements. However, leaders are aware that practice needs to be refined and embedded in order to ensure that this group of pupils make sustained progress throughout the school.

In 2017, progress in writing was below the national average by the end of Year 6. Although improving, current pupils are making slower progress in writing than in reading and mathematics.

Pupils continue to make faster progress in mathematics than in other subjects. This area of the curriculum is well taught and the strengths that leaders have identified in the teaching of mathematics are being used to develop practice in other subjects.

Staff utilise questions and resources well to help pupils to learn. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge, clear explanations and positive relationships with the pupils to aid progress. Teaching assistants are well deployed so that they have a positive impact on learning.

Pupils behave well. In class, they listen carefully and work productively with staff and each other. During the inspection, pupils were fully engaged in a range of activities.

Improvements in governance identified at the time of the last inspection have been sustained. Governors use their wide range of skills and experience to offer appropriate support and challenge to leaders. They have a clear understanding of how the school is performing.

External support

Support commissioned on behalf of the local authority is helping leaders to improve provision. The adviser has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensures that regular visits focus on the school's priorities. Leaders value this effective support and challenge, which is helping them 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 Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector