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5 September 2018

Mrs Sam Fearnough  
Westways Primary School  
Mona Avenue  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S10 1NE

Dear Mrs Fearnough

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

Following my visit to your school on 16 July 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 has taken 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 recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good. You and your new senior leadership team have, since September 2017, been highly effective in tackling the weaknesses in teaching identified at the last inspection. You have implemented systems that ensure that staff are well supported and directed in how they can improve the quality of teaching and learning in their classrooms. You and your team recognise that subject leaders still need to take a more active part in school improvement.

Pupils say that behaviour is still good in school. They are polite, courteous and friendly as they move around the school and in lessons. They also comment that the new behaviour reward system works really well and has improved behaviour. They clearly understand how the merit system works and how they benefit by earning rewards. They are proud of their school and stress how homophobic and racist language or bullying is not tolerated. Although pupils comment on how much they enjoy coming to school, rates of attendance have fallen since the last inspection. Many parents responding to Ofsted's Parent View facility are not happy

with the work the school does. You and your team recognise the importance of further improving communication and relationships with parents.

The school should take further action to:

- improve rates of attendance by extending the activities which promote and communicate the importance of regular attendance and carrying out more-careful analysis of attendance information so that there is more accurate targeting of those families who need support
- build on current communication avenues so that parents have a greater knowledge and understanding of what is happening in school, when and why
- ensure that subject leaders take a more active part in school improvement by building a greater in-depth understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the senior leadership team and subject leaders. The inspector also met with governors, including the chair and vice-chair, a group of staff and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school action plan and self-evaluation documents were evaluated. The inspector spent time considering learning in lessons and work in books in all key stages with the executive headteacher. The inspector met with two groups of pupils and also spoke to pupils, where appropriate, during lessons. The inspector met with a small group of parents and also considered parental opinions received via Ofsted's Parent View and school parental questionnaires. A range of documentation was studied, for example the record of safeguarding checks made on adults and information on pupils' progress and attainment.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, you have taken on the role of executive headteacher. You commenced this role in September 2017. You have established a new senior leadership team from existing members of school staff, with most of them having experience in leadership roles. The senior leadership team now consists of the executive headteacher, head of school, a deputy headteacher and three assistant headteachers. The teaching staff have been a stable team since the last inspection, with few staff leaving or joining the school since then.

## **Main findings**

Senior leaders and governors make every effort to ensure that pupils are safe. They undertake appropriate checks on all adults who work with the pupils. However, the recording of these checks is not always as accurate as it could be, despite the

governors having an external safeguarding audit in February 2018. These administrative issues were immediately rectified when identified during this inspection. Pupils say they feel safe. They say they feel comfortable to raise any concerns they have with adults and know they will be dealt with. Pupils commented that they like the new way of lining up and going into school in the morning as this makes them feel safe and welcomed.

As an exceptionally strong headteacher you lead your senior team well. You have ensured that they have quickly developed their roles and that they support their professional development through undertaking national qualifications in leadership. The deputy and assistant headteachers have quickly demonstrated that they can make a difference to the quality of teaching. They monitor rigorously the quality of teaching and guide others as to how they can improve the outcomes that all groups of pupils are making. They have a very accurate idea of where teaching needs to be strengthened. Action plans and pupils' outcomes demonstrate how they tackle areas identified for improvement. This depth of knowledge and information is now clearly communicated to governors. They are more able to hold leaders to account for the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Leaders have acted upon areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. For example, they consider the learning needs of different groups of pupils and raise expectations of what pupils can achieve. Senior leaders meet at least half termly with teaching staff and use a range of information to assess the progress pupils are making. They use these meetings to ensure that action is taken to support pupils in making at least good progress. The rest of the staff feel very well supported by all the senior leaders. They feel they are listened to and every effort is made to help them improve their skills. Staff take part in training and work with other schools to help improve the quality of their teaching. Although subject leaders have begun to take responsibility for the planning of the subjects they lead, they are not fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching. This means they do not have a full understanding of the quality of teaching across the school and, therefore, remain uncertain of what needs to happen to improve it.

Pupils know how they can improve their work and exactly what is expected of them. This is the result of the very comprehensive feedback system that has been introduced and because senior leaders ensure that it is applied consistently throughout the school. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and know them well. Pupils work well together and are respectful of the opinions of others. Teachers have raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve and this is clearly evident, for example, in the improved quality of writing across the school. Teachers and senior leaders have carefully considered how to improve classroom environments in all key stages. They now promote and support good learning and carefully organise the learning areas in the early years provision. The quality of teaching has improved as teachers are more accurately planning and delivering lessons. This allows pupils of different abilities to make better progress. Overall, all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are making much better progress than in previous years.

Senior leaders, including governors, are acutely aware that some of the changes implemented in the school have not been welcomed by some parents. Many parents have mixed opinions of how well the school is led and managed. Parents, spoken to during the inspection, were highly positive about the leadership of the school and a parent questionnaire completed in July 2018 also supports their views. However, although the number of responses seen on Ofsted's Parent View were very small, these were mainly negative responses. A very small number of parents have also made formal complaints to the school and these are well documented and appropriately dealt with. School leaders have therefore taken great time to introduce new lines of communication with parents such the new website, regular newsletters and weekly electronic notes home. The governors asked parents to complete a questionnaire in January 2018 about how well the school communicates with them and instigated changes following the feedback received. However, school leaders recognise that communication with parents could be even better. This improvement is necessary to ensure that parents have a clear idea of what is happening in school, when it is happening and why, and that they are given as much advance notice as possible of events taking place.

### **External support**

The school is well supported by the local authority and it has also commissioned an external whole-school review and a safeguarding audit. This support has helped confirm the school's progress towards becoming a good or outstanding school.

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

Yours sincerely

Jo Sharpe  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**