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Miss Jane Bamber
Osmotherley Primary School
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Dear Miss Bamber

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Osmotherley Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 2 October 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 last section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- embed the improvements made to the teaching of mathematics to further improve the levels of pupils' progress
- continue to provide development for the recently appointed early years leader so that the existing strong early years provision is built upon.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and the school's leaders for mathematics and early years. I met with the local authority school improvement adviser and held a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school action plan and considered your self-evaluation document. Together, we visited lessons in all classes in school. I also observed the teaching of mathematics in key stage 2. I reviewed your analysis of pupil progress information for all year groups. Together, we sampled pupils' work in mathematics and writing books. I reviewed your records of the safeguarding checks that you complete for staff, governors and volunteers in school.

Context

Since the last inspection, you have been appointed as the substantive headteacher. You have appointed a teacher for the early years and key stage 1 class.

Main findings

You have benefited from working alongside a consultant headteacher and your local authority adviser to develop your approaches to improve the quality of teaching across the school. You are also sharpening school self-evaluation and improvement planning. This has improved your leadership. Key stage 2 teachers now fully use the effective approach to the teaching of writing developed by you in key stage 1. The improvements to the teaching of writing are clear in pupils' books and in the school's pupil progress information. Pupils' attainment in writing has improved over the last two years and is strong at the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2.

Your subject leader for mathematics has responded well to training and support from the local authority adviser. She has introduced new approaches to mathematics teaching, and teachers use relevant resources to help pupils' learning. This is having a positive impact on the development of pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 has been strong over the last two years. Last year, you introduced some refinements to develop mathematics teaching further. The work to advance pupils' mathematics learning is at an earlier stage of development to the writing development and you recognise that this work needs embedding.

You have taken steps to improve the quality of teaching. Your coaching for staff, combined with additional teacher capacity, has improved the teaching of mathematics and writing in key stage 2. This is helping to improve pupils' progress. You intend to continue this coaching approach with all teachers this year. Your detailed analysis of pupils' progress helps you and your staff identify where pupils are at risk of falling behind. Where this is the case, you and your staff act promptly to improve pupils' learning.

Leaders' analysis shows that children in early years continue to make good progress from their starting points. Consequently, children generally achieve the expected standards by the end of Reception, with a high proportion exceeding this standard. Current children have settled well into the Reception class. During our visits to classes, these children engaged well with the learning activities available to them and they could explain what they were achieving. Leaders, including governors, are keen to continue to enhance early years provision and the outdoor learning classroom has been recently improved. The recently appointed early years leader, who is also the key stage 1 teacher, has clear plans for the effective use of this enhanced provision.

Leaders have reviewed other aspects of the curriculum. There is some subject specialist teaching which has a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. For example, science teaching is ensuring that at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils' attainment is high compared to national averages. During the inspection, it was possible to note quality art work on display around the school. This illustrates leaders' focus on improving pupils' learning across the curriculum.

Leaders' self-evaluation is detailed and draws on a range of evidence to identify strengths and priorities. You have created a well-thought-through school improvement plan which focuses sharply on what needs to improve. Systems are in place for checking the impact of leaders' actions. You intend to refine this approach further by mapping out leaders' monitoring for this year. This aims to sequence leaders' checking activities in alignment with the school development plan.

Governors have put in place useful systems for holding leaders to account. Meetings with school leaders and regular reporting to governors' meetings ensure that governors are well informed. This enables governors to have a strong understanding of the school's priorities and the impact of leaders' actions. Governors have made effective strategic decisions in relation to increasing your leadership time, to drive improvement and the appointment of staff to increase teaching capacity. This is having a positive impact on leadership effectiveness and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Leaders are outward looking and seek to identify practice which will improve the school. For example, you actively sought the opportunity for the school to join the Beacon Partnership. This has provided teachers with the opportunity to consider effective practice across this partnership and, where relevant, to use their findings to develop the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in your school.

External support

Local authority support has been well targeted. An appropriate focus on improving the quality of teaching across a range of subjects, the development of the early years provision and leadership development aligns well with the school's priorities.

The view of the local authority is that the school no longer needs a high level of support. Current support is now more 'light touch'.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Reeves
Her Majesty's Inspector