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Miss Sarah Sampson
Executive Headteacher
Haggonfields Primary School
Marjorie Road
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Dear Miss Sampson

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Haggonfields Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 24 and 25 September 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in January 2019. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers are not taking effective action towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

The school's improvement plan is not fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Peter Stonier

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in January 2019.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently address the serious weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements by ensuring that:
 - all leaders responsible for safeguarding, including governors, know, understand and carry out their duties in line with statutory guidance, including in the early years
 - leaders record and monitor all safeguarding incidents and leaders' actions to keep pupils safe
 - leaders, staff and governors are fully aware of the actions they must take in order to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremist views.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders respond promptly to advice and support on how to improve the provision
 - leaders check that the new systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the provision lead to improvements in teaching, learning and assessment, and pupils' outcomes
 - leaders use and evaluate additional funding effectively, including for disadvantaged pupils, for pupils with SEND, and for PE and sport
 - the role of governors is strengthened, so that school leaders are effectively supported, challenged and held to account.
- Improve the quality of teaching, including in the early years, by ensuring that:
 - teachers use information about pupils' abilities to plan activities that meet the needs of all pupils, including pupils with SEND
 - teachers have high expectations of all pupils and set work that provides sufficient and appropriate challenge, particularly for the most able, so that they achieve the higher standards
 - teachers provide pupils with increased opportunities to write at length across the curriculum and insist they use their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills accurately.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - reducing the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school, particularly pupils with SEND, so it is below the national average.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management should be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management should be improved.

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 24 and 25 September 2019

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work and held meetings with the executive headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, the leader responsible for early years and English, eight members of staff, the office manager, a family support worker, two local authority representatives and four members of the governing body, including the chair. He spoke with 10 pupils from different year groups and listened to six pupils from key stage 1 read. The inspector visited all classrooms and scrutinised a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and school improvement. He considered the external reviews of the effectiveness of governance and the use of pupil premium funding.

Context

School leadership has undergone significant disruption and turbulence since the previous inspection. Both the substantive headteacher and deputy headteacher left their posts at the end of the last academic year, after periods of absence.

The executive headteacher was appointed in September 2019 and works at the school for two days a week. The acting deputy headteacher was also appointed in September 2019 after joining Haggonfields in the summer term as the Year 5 and Year 6 class teacher. The acting deputy headteacher is the temporary leader responsible for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

There are currently no leaders responsible for the use of the pupil premium and the physical education (PE) and sport premium.

The local authority brokered the support of Walesby Church of England Primary School during the autumn term in 2018. This support was aimed at strengthening school leadership and improving the quality of teaching. The executive headteacher is the current substantive headteacher at Walesby Church of England Primary School.

The school is subject to a direct academy order and it is planned to convert the school to an academy by the end of 2019.

The progress made by the school in tackling the key areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection

Leaders and the governing body have ensured that safeguarding is now effective. All staff have received appropriate and up-to-date training on identifying the signs of neglect and potential radicalisation. Although not yet approved by the governing body, the safeguarding policy takes into account the latest government guidance and includes peer-on-peer abuse and 'upskirting'. The school's website contains information for parents and carers regarding child sexual exploitation, female genital

mutilation and a link to guidance regarding potential extremism and the 'Prevent' duty. Pupils told the inspector that they felt safe and that if they had any problems, there were plenty of adults at the school who would help them.

Staff use well the online system to record any welfare concerns they have about a pupil or family. Safeguarding records are detailed. Staff make referrals to outside agencies, such as social care, swiftly when support is needed. Checks made on adults before they are allowed to work or volunteer at the school now meet current requirements. The executive headteacher rectified out-of-date safeguarding information on the school's website during the course of the inspection.

Plans are in place to introduce a new, well-sequenced curriculum. This will ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, have opportunities to learn more and remember more in different subjects. It will also support teachers in identifying what pupils already know and what they need to learn next.

Teachers have begun to provide pupils with increased opportunities to write at length in subjects other than English. For example, Year 2 pupils have written about the Great Fire of London. The subject leader for English has planned further opportunities for writing for each class in the autumn term. Teachers' expectations are still not high enough. For example, they do not always insist that pupils use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar. Older pupils were observed misspelling words such as 'can't', 'always', 'paper' and 'trying'.

The proportion of pupils, including those pupils with SEND, who are absent or persistently absent from school is still a cause for concern. An updated attendance policy was due to be introduced in April 2019. However, this has not yet been approved by the governing body.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The governing body and the previous substantive school leaders did not act swiftly or decisively to tackle all the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Too much time was lost in securing the external reviews of the pupil premium funding and of governance. Some actions from these reviews have still not been completed. For example, leaders have not carried out a skills audit for support staff, and governors have not yet received training on how to understand assessment information from statutory tests.

In the months after the last inspection, recommendations from leaders of Walesby Church of England Primary School (the partner school) and the local authority adviser were not carried out promptly by the previous substantive leaders. Some were not completed at all. This slowed the rate of school improvement.

The executive headteacher cannot accurately allocate or evaluate the impact of the additional funding received by the school for disadvantaged pupils and for PE and sport. This is because there is no leader or action plan in place for either of these

areas. The governing body cannot, therefore, monitor the impact of this extra funding.

The acting deputy headteacher has a good overview of the extra funding received for pupils with SEND. It is clear what extra support these pupils are receiving and the impact this is having on their progress.

The executive headteacher has ensured that some monitoring activities have taken place. For example, teachers from Haggonfields moderated pupils' work with teachers from the partner school. This helped teachers to support pupils to improve their writing and mathematical skills.

The partner school has also provided training in the teaching of reading and writing. It is too early to judge the impact of this work.

Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- Minutes from recent governing body meetings show that the governing body challenges leaders by asking appropriate questions. The governing body is therefore beginning to hold leaders to account for some aspects of the school's performance.
- The executive headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are effective. In a relatively short space of time, they have gained the trust of pupils, parents and staff. The previously absent, and much-needed, systems and procedures necessary to ensure the safety and academic success of pupils are beginning to embed.

Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- The current school improvement plan is not fit for purpose. It is unwieldy and contains too much information. It is difficult for the executive headteacher and the governing body to monitor which actions have been successfully completed and which have not. The plan has not been evaluated by leaders or the governing body since 4 June 2019. This is too long.

External support

The local authority has provided good support through the brokering of the partner school and through the appointment of the part-time executive headteacher. However, the previous substantive senior leaders were too slow to respond to the advice given. In some cases, they did not respond at all. This has delayed the necessary improvements needed.