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13 May 2013

Beverley Martin
Headteacher
Matravers School
Springfield Road
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Wiltshire
BA13 3QH

Dear Ms Martin

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Matravers School

Following my visit to your school on Monday 13 May 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. 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 February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, six members of the Governing Body, including the Chair, and a representative from the local authority. The school's improvement and post-inspection action plans were evaluated.

Context

A significant number of staff, including some senior leaders, have left the school recently. The interim headteacher will stand down at the end of this school year and a new headteacher has been appointed to take up post in September 2013. The current Chair of the governing body took up this position shortly before the inspection in February; two new governors have been recruited and elections are

being held to appoint a further three new governors to fill vacancies. The school's plans for further development are constrained by budget limitations, not least in refurbishing much of the accommodation that does not provide a stimulating learning environment.

Main findings

- The school's senior leaders and governors are absolutely clear about what needs to improve. The 'rapid improvement plan' is thorough and detailed; this plan has been in place since the start of this school year and already included all of the areas for improvement, identified in the s5 inspection report. Following the inspection, the plan was reviewed by the school and found not to require any significant amendments, although separate plans were generated to focus on the key improvement points in the report.
- The improvement plan sets clear and challenging targets for improving students' achievement, including in the sixth form and for key groups. These achievement targets underpin all other actions and provide a secure basis for monitoring and evaluating improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Teaching is improving with a large majority of lessons at least good. Students' achievement is rising as a result, although senior leaders are clear that more needs to be done for some groups of students. Overall, students' progress in mathematics is much improved.
- Precisely targeted interventions, focused on particular students, are based on a much more rigorous tracking system. Careful checks ensure that the assessment information used is reliable and accurate, which is enabling students' progress to be monitored with precision.
- A range of effective strategies has been introduced to tackle students' low levels of literacy and communication skills. Students with the greatest need are targeted in Year 7 and receive specialist support. A range of other good approaches is being used across the curriculum for all year groups. This is beginning to have an impact on improving students' progress across a range of subjects.
- The quality of teaching is monitored carefully using evidence gathered from lesson observations, the scrutiny of students' work and the analysis of the achievement tracking data. This ensures that the quality of an individual teacher's 'teaching over time' and its impact on each class's progress is evaluated well.
- Those teachers that need help to improve have clear support plans and targets, but, when necessary, the school makes full use of capability procedures.
- During the year, the school has successfully moved from effective whole-school staff development, focused on key aspects of teaching that required greatest improvement and better consistency, to professional development matched to individual teacher and/or subject-specific departmental needs. This is a key to recent improvements in the quality of teaching.
- The analysis of student progress and achievement data is used well by senior staff to ensure that middle leaders are being held to account more robustly than

previously. Where necessary, middle leaders are provided with individual training to develop their skills.

- The governing body is already much better placed to ask challenging questions to hold the school's senior leaders to account. They are clear that actions need to be evaluated through the impact on students, such as their achievement, attendance and/or behaviour. A National College review of the governing body has started and the outcomes will be used to ensure that it has the full range of skills it requires.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement, identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommended no additional actions.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection and it is recommended that, given the appointment of a new headteacher, HMI make at least one further visit to the school before its next inspection.

External support

The local authority is providing the school with a wide range of good support. This includes the appointment of the interim headteacher, help from National and Local Leaders of Education, specialist subject and other support, and arranging the review of the governing body. It is monitoring carefully the progress the school is making. The new headteacher will receive extensive mentoring support, when he takes up post in September 2013.

It is recommended that senior leaders attend the school improvement seminars organised by Ofsted.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Wiltshire County Council and the Education Funding Agency.

Yours sincerely

James Sage
Her Majesty's Inspector