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18 July 2013

Mrs J Tomlinson
Headteacher
Brotherton and Byram Community Primary School
Low Street
Knottingley
West Yorkshire
WF11 9HQ

Dear Mrs Tomlinson

Special measures monitoring inspection of Brotherton and Byram Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 17 July 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help your staff gave during the inspection and for the time they made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in April 2013.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the assistant headteacher, middle leaders, governors, and a representative of the local authority. A telephone conversation was also held with the executive headteacher. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

Following the inspection in April 2013, the headteacher remains on long-term absence. The local authority has brokered the support of an executive headteacher from a neighbouring school for two and a half days a week to support the leadership of the school. In addition, a further assistant headteacher will join the school in September 2013 to take a lead on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The other assistant headteacher will take on the role of coordinator for special needs and inclusion.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

While not expecting the outcome of the April inspection and despite some initial disappointment with the judgement of special measures, senior leaders and governors are putting the concerns of the past behind them and are working effectively as a team to get

the school back on track. All agree that the issues identified are the correct ones and that there is a need to raise expectations and ensure rapid improvement. The pace of change has accelerated and appropriate action has been taken to strengthen provision and tighten procedures. For example, information on the school's performance is now being shared more widely amongst staff, middle leaders are more focused in their work and teachers are held to account more effectively for the progress their children are making. As a result, senior leaders are better placed to judge how well the school is performing and staff are more aware of the progress pupils should make.

The school's revised improvement plan provides a clear sense of direction for the school. It has been shared with staff and identifies precisely the action required to bring about improvements. It contains detailed success criteria and weekly milestones by which progress can be effectively measured. This makes it straightforward for senior leaders and governors to gauge how well the school is improving over time.

Governance is becoming sharper-edged. After a period of much change with new appointments, governors have brought a sense of urgency to improving the school. Their early discussions are demonstrating a clear understanding of the school's most pressing priorities and a determination to challenge senior leaders and hold them to account.

The local authority's statement of action contains criteria and targets for all the areas of improvement and reflects the role of governors in challenging and holding the school to account. It is suitably underpinned with specific milestones against which the impact of action can be measured. It is also clear by whom, when and how progress will be monitored and evaluated.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Steve Isherwood
Her Majesty's Inspector