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Mrs Belinda Wardle
Headteacher
Westbourne Primary School
Skinner Lane
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD8 7PL

Dear Mrs Wardle

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Westbourne Primary School, Bradford

Following my visit to your school on 14 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the 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 visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in November 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. We looked at the latest pupil progress information and some performance management information. We visited lessons, looked at the learning environments, spoke with pupils and looked at their work.

Context

There have been some temporary changes to staffing since the inspection through staff absence. A number of staff are on temporary contracts pending permanent appointments for September. A member of the teaching staff is due to leave today and will be replaced by a temporary member of staff till the end of the spring term. A newly qualified teacher has been appointed for the start of the summer term.

Main findings

You have a clear vision for improvement and the action plan breaks down precisely the steps needed to address standards in teaching and pupil achievement. The plan is comprehensive, taking into account the support provided by the local authority and partner schools. It involves a number of staff and external partners in the monitoring and evaluation process as well. Success criteria are measurable and clear time-lines given. Most actions have been completed on time and the very few that haven't, have been quickly realigned to make sure the school stays on its planned trajectory to good. Impact measures have been recorded to enable governors and the local authority to make careful checks on the school's progress.

The school's latest pupil achievement information indicates improving standards in Key Stage 1 and Upper Key Stage 2 since the inspection. This is not the case in lower Key Stage 2, especially in Year 4. This can be clearly linked to the quality of teaching.

We discussed the attainment targets set for the end of Key Stage 1. During our visits to lessons, we saw all pupils eager to learn and some pupils operating at much higher levels than your initial targets indicate. We agreed that these are not as ambitious as they need to be, if ground is to be gained sooner than later. This is limiting teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly in writing and mathematics. The targets you set are much more ambitious in Key Stage 2. You have just taken action to increase these targets after the latest data capture.

Teaching is improving because the Leaders of Learning in Key Stage 1 and upper Key Stage 2 have developed quickly their understanding of what they need to do, and to focus on, to improve teaching and raise standards. This is already impacting on standards. This is not the case in lower Key Stage 2. There is insufficient support and challenge from the lower Key Stage 2 leader to ensure that teaching moves to good as quickly as it needs to so that pupils can make at least expected progress. You have taken action to address this.

During my visit, we were able to look closely at the quality of the teaching of writing. Where it is good, teachers fully understand the systems and processes that underpin the outcomes needed and have developed learning environments that support the writing process well. Writing remains strong in Early Years Foundation Stage and better in upper Key Stage 2. It is now improving in Key Stage 1. However, in lower Key Stage 2, we saw little evidence of the steps needed in teaching and learning to ensure the best outcomes in pupils' extended writing. Pupils did not fully understand the genre they were studying and the application of basic skills was much weaker. Environments, although much better than when seen during the inspection, are not as language rich as they need to be to develop pupils' vocabulary for writing. There was less pride in handwriting and presentation.

It is clear that you are developing provision for the more able and have taken action to improve teaching for this group of pupils. Some improvements have been made, but the quality of teaching and provision is not yet consistent across all year groups. Expectations are still not as high as they need to be.

Issues with staff mobility continue. There are further changes in staffing for September 2013. However, if improvements in middle leadership are sustained and the issue with leadership in low Key Stage 2 resolved, the school should be well-placed to manage this change

The Governing Body has taken action to improve its effectiveness and a couple of key appointments have supported this. It has the information it needs to know how well the school is doing and is now providing the challenge needed. The newly formed 'Post-Ofsted Plan' committee meets more regularly to check on the progress and impact of actions. Since the inspection, the Governing Body has worked hard to improve communication with parents.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority is providing effective support and is fully involved in supporting and monitoring improvements through the work of the achievement officer and consultants. The school is also making effective use of the long-standing partnership it has with other Bradford schools and values this support highly.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Bradford.

Yours sincerely

Anne Bowyer

Her Majesty's Inspector