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21 May 2014

Mrs Elizabeth Crayton  
Headteacher  
Copley Junior School  
Cadeby Road  
Sprotbrough  
Doncaster  
South Yorkshire  
DN5 7SD

Dear Mrs Crayton

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Copley Junior School, Doncaster**

Following my visit to your school on 20 May 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 January 2014. 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. The school should take further action to:

- develop the role of subject leaders in checking the quality of the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics
- complete the review of the school's homework policy and ensure homework makes a greater contribution to pupil progress, particularly for the most able
- ensure pupils making slower progress in Years 3, 4 and 5 receive additional support for reading, writing or mathematics, so that gaps in their knowledge and understanding are quickly addressed.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, the Chair and other members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the Local Leader of Education that is supporting the school. I spoke to the vice-chair of the governing body on the telephone. I also met with a group of pupils. You accompanied me on a tour of the school to observe the learning environment, pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning. I evaluated the school's planning for improvement, pupil progress data and records of governing body meetings.

## **Context**

Since the inspection, one teacher has begun a maternity leave. Her post has been covered by a temporary secondment of a member of staff until the end of the summer term. One new parent governor has been appointed.

## **Main findings**

You have a very thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have detailed plans in place to bring about the necessary improvements. Your planning provides valuable milestones and success criteria for those responsible for evaluating whether or not the school is on course to become a good school. Since your appointment as headteacher, you have successfully communicated a clear vision for the school and all staff are supportive of the changes you are making.

From my tour of the school it was evident pupils behave well, have positive attitudes and take pride in their work. They told me the introduction of the new curriculum has made lessons more interesting and enjoyable. They also said they find the literacy and numeracy target cards helpful, and that teachers are now better at explaining how to improve their work.

Much has already been done to develop the quality of teaching. Under the new curriculum, teachers are providing good opportunities for pupils to write at length, and to use and apply mathematics creatively. Examples of pupils' writing displayed around school and in books are of a high quality. A new marking policy has been introduced and teachers are ensuring there are more opportunities for pupils to learn from one another's work. You have made considerable efforts to engage the support of parents. For example, you have identified homework is not used well, and you are consulting with parents on ways to improve its effectiveness. You have arranged good quality training opportunities, and some teachers have responded quickly and improved their practice. However, you are aware there is more to be done to ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good.

You have continued to give more responsibility to other leaders in the school and their skills at checking the quality of teaching are developing. They have also led

work to strengthen the accuracy of teacher assessment. The deputy headteacher has introduced a new data management system, and the information it provides means pupils' progress can now be thoroughly analysed. Whilst the school can now identify those pupils or groups making slower progress, resources to provide them with additional support to address gaps in learning need further development.

Members of the governing body have responded positively to the findings of the last inspection. They now receive more regular information about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, and scrutinise the work of the school more thoroughly. A school improvement committee now meets each month to check the impact of actions in the school development plan and review pupil progress data. Although at an early stage, this committee is beginning to provide more challenge and scrutiny. For example, the committee now checks on the gap in achievement between those pupils supported by the pupil premium and their peers.

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**

Since your appointment as headteacher you have been keen to draw upon external sources of support. At your invitation, the local authority conducted a review of the quality of teaching and has brokered support from the headteacher of Mexborough Highwoods Primary School, who is a Local Leader of Education. This support is now tightly focused on eradicating any inadequate teaching. In addition, you have ensured teachers have visited other schools to learn from their outstanding practice. A senior officer from the local authority attends the monthly school improvement committee meetings and this is helping to develop the skills of governors.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Smith  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**