

PROTECT-INSPECTION

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15 October 2014

Mr Martin Edge
Headteacher
Clowne Junior School
King Street
Cheterfield
S43 4BS

Dear Mr Edge

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit to Clowne Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 14 October 2014, 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 June 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.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the senior leadership team, the literacy subject leader, three representatives of the governing body, a group of pupils and two representatives of the local authority, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated your plans for improvement. I considered documentation relating to the monitoring of teaching and reviewed your most recent data on pupils' progress and attainment. We conducted a tour of the school together and visited all classes to see pupils and staff at work. I considered the quality of teachers' marking.

Context

Since the recent inspection, you have appointed new subject leaders for literacy and numeracy. You have also had an external review of governance and the use of the pupil premium grant.

Main findings

You, your staff and governors are working with resolute determination to tackle the areas requiring improvement. You have begun to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve through your improved tracking of pupils' progress. Teachers use this information to plan work that is better matched to the learning needs of all pupils. You have reviewed the school's approach to the marking of pupils' work. Pupils talked enthusiastically about the 'pupil presentation promise' and shared examples of how teachers' comments are helping them to improve their work at a faster rate. Pupils' books showed that they are responding well to increased opportunities to write at length in a broader range of subjects. For example, pupils have recently used their autumn art work as a stimulus for descriptive writing.

Staff are developing a better understanding of what good practice looks like because they have regular opportunities to observe and share the good practice already recognised within the school, as well as through visiting a partner school. There is a strong culture of team work and no-one works in isolation.

Subject leaders are becoming more involved in checking on the quality of teaching and learning through undertaking lesson observations, checking on work in pupils' books and checking data on pupils' progress. They have a sharp focus on how this is contributing to the progress being made by different groups of pupils, particularly middle ability pupils and those supported by the pupil premium.

Governors have used the external review of governance to re-structure their committees. They have begun training to update their skills and knowledge. You are providing them with a good range of information about pupils' progress and this is helping them to hold you to account. The review of pupil premium spending has increased governors' awareness of their need to monitor the impact of this provision.

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 timely support and challenge to the school. It has successfully brokered the support of a partner school which is effectively supporting senior leaders and staff in making the necessary improvements.

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

Yours sincerely

Dorothy Bathgate
Her Majesty's Inspector

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The letter has been copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy

