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Mrs Sharon Hutchinson
Headteacher
Adwick Primary School
Stafford Road
Woodlands
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN6 7LW

Dear Mrs Hutchinson

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Adwick Primary 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 confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in January 2014. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Interim Director Children and Young People's Service for Doncaster.

Yours sincerely

Chris Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2014

- Improve teaching across all key stages and particularly in lower Key Stage 2 so that all is at least good or better by ensuring that:
 - all teachers consistently plan lessons that challenge and engage all pupils appropriately, particularly those at most risk of falling behind in their learning at Key Stage 2
 - all teachers have higher expectations of all pupils
 - all teachers carefully check that pupils understand what they are learning, that pupils are productive and learn well when they work on their own and that they behave well at all times
 - all teachers mark pupils' work regularly and give pupils the guidance they need to improve their learning in all subjects
 - the teaching of mathematics is improved so that all pupils are secure in their number skills.

- Raise standards in order that all pupils, particularly in some Key Stage 2 classes, make at least good progress in English, especially in reading and writing, and in mathematics by ensuring that:
 - spelling, grammar and punctuation skills are taught well and applied consistently in all classes and pupils have more opportunities to write at length to extend their literacy skills
 - pupils' ability to understand and recall key number facts and multiplication tables are secure and that pupils apply them confidently in calculation and problem-solving activities
 - pupils supported through the pupil premium funding and those with special educational needs receive effective and timely help to accelerate their learning so that they achieve as well as they should.

- Improve further the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governors, in driving forward the school's improvement by:
 - making sure that staff training has a significant impact on the quality of teaching, and if necessary attending to where it is not, in order to accelerate pupils' progress in every class
 - ensuring that behaviour is managed well in all lessons
 - ensuring all subject leaders conduct rigorous checks on teaching and learning and drive improvements effectively in their subjects
 - undertaking an external review of the school's use of the pupil premium in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 14 October 2014

Evidence

The inspector met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the headteacher of Hill Top Primary school, who is a national leader of education, and a representative of the local authority. The inspector carried out joint lesson observations with the headteacher, considered data about progress and attainment and looked at pupils' work in books.

Context

Since the last monitoring inspection, six teachers have left the school. Four new teachers started in September, two of whom are newly qualified teachers. A fifth new teacher, who will also have leadership responsibilities, will start at the school in November. Two senior leaders have an increased teaching commitment and there have been a number of changes to middle leadership positions. A new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in July. The national leader of education who is supporting the school will continue in this role until the end of the autumn term.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

- The headteacher's detailed plans, accurate evaluation and practical approach have ensured key aspects of the school continue to improve.
- The headteacher has managed the challenges posed by a significant turnover of staff effectively. A number of new teaching appointments have been made and good induction arrangements have helped new teachers to settle in. The school's policies for teaching and marking are being followed consistently. The quality of teaching, while still variable, is improving.
- Leaders continue to draw upon the support and expertise of colleagues at Hill Top Primary School. There are good plans in place to strengthen the quality of teaching further.
- Leaders have begun the implementation of the school's preferred approach to assessing pupils' progress. They recognise the need to ensure the new system provides accurate and reliable data. However, the implementation of the new system has delayed the setting of numerical targets for pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, and performance objectives for teachers are yet to be formally set.
- Although a number of middle leaders are new to their roles, they understand their responsibilities and are enthusiastically leading initiatives to develop the curriculum. There are some early indications that these initiatives are improving the quality of learning, although middle leaders need to ensure

they systematically check and evaluate the impact these initiatives are having on pupil progress.

- The headteacher and governors have acted to strengthen the leadership of the school's work to narrow gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- An external review of governance has been completed. The new Chair of the Governing Body is ensuring there is greater scrutiny of achievement data and analysis of the quality of teaching. In addition, senior leaders are now being held more accountable for delivering improvements.

Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- The proportion of children in the early years who reached a good level of development rose in 2014.
- A better approach to the teaching of letters and sounds has had a positive impact and the proportion of pupils who reached the required standard rose sharply in 2014. Pupils currently in the Reception classes and in Year 1 are making good progress in developing early reading skills and the proportion of pupils reaching the required standard continues to rise.
- In 2014 more pupils across a number of year groups made expected or good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils have more opportunities to practise and recall key number facts and there are more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their numerical knowledge to solve unfamiliar problems. As a result they are developing more confidence and are making better progress in mathematics.
- A recent initiative to develop the quality of pupils' writing is having a positive impact. Pupils have begun to write more productively and with more fluency. The school's new marking policy, which places a greater emphasis on grammar, punctuation and spelling, is ensuring pupils more readily make corrections and improvements to their work in 'wish time'.
- Because more lessons are now pitched at the right level, pupils generally show more positive attitudes to learning and disruptions to lessons are unusual.

Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- Standards of attainment in 2014 in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 did not improve, as had been anticipated. Levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics were below the levels

achieved by the school in 2013. Achievement across the school remains below that seen nationally.

- The school's approach to raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils has not been sufficiently well coordinated or rigorous. Gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and their peers remain across a number of subjects and year groups. Leaders and governors need to do more to check on the progress of disadvantaged pupils and ensure they receive high quality additional support that addresses gaps in their knowledge.
- Some pupils still do not take sufficient care with their handwriting and presentation, because some teachers do not have high enough expectations.
- Governors need to ensure they systematically hold all senior and middle leaders accountable for the impact of initiatives designed to improve the curriculum and the quality of teaching.

External support

- The national leader of education who is supporting the school continues to make a significant contribution. Together with other colleagues from Hill Top Primary School, she has supported the headteacher to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the school accurately. Over the coming months, partnership work will focus on intensively supporting individual teachers, providing further training for all teachers and strengthening the key leadership skills of measuring impact and holding others to account.
- The local authority continues to monitor the progress the school is making appropriately.