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Dr Tessa Browning
Broadway First School
Lime Tree Avenue
Broadway
WR12 7BD

Dear Dr Browning

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Broadway First School

Following my visit to your school on 4 December 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 September 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:

- Strengthen leadership and management, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that the school does not become over-dependent on the extensive support it has received.
- Check the impact of teaching assistants on pupil learning as closely as that carried out for teachers

Evidence

During the inspection meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, a group of pupils, four members of the Governing Body including the chair and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's action plan was evaluated. Other documents were scrutinised including the latest achievement data analysis and records of interventions for specific pupils

Context

Since the last inspection there have been no changes to staffing. An associate governor has been very recently appointed and an experienced deputy headteacher will be seconded to the school for one term from January 2015.

Main findings

Leaders of the school, including governors, have a realistic view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have recognised the need to strengthen the leadership of the school as its first priority. Although the recent recruitment campaign was unsuccessful in appointing a deputy headteacher, an experienced deputy head has been seconded for the spring term and the post has been re-advertised.

Governors have recently established a data committee to check pupils' progress and attainment although it has yet to have its first meeting. An additional appointment has been made in order to strengthen the governing body. Governors spoken to say that are now receiving more detailed information, for example on achievement data which enables them to ask challenging questions. They also reported that minutes of meetings now more accurately reflect the questions asked and discussions held. There are very active governor links for literacy and numeracy.

Middle leaders are still inexperienced in their role and some who are new have not yet been involved in monitoring teaching, analysing data or conducting pupil progress meetings. They have action plans to carry out these roles in the future however. Two middle leaders were able to gain some experience as joint acting headteachers this term during your recent illness.

The school's action plan is detailed and is appropriately linked to the development points raised in the last inspection report. Milestones are included but do not indicate details which would enable governors to determine whether the proportion of pupils making expected or more than expected progress is sufficient for the school to be in line to achieve its end of term targets.

Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage still remains to be resolved. As there is not a designated coordinator the role is being covered out by you. The school has

received considerable external help and provided its own internal support to bring about some improvements to the Early Years environment, planning and work to engage boys.

Pupil progress meetings are held twice termly with teachers. You have ensured that half termly data on pupil achievement provided by teachers is more accurate firstly through internal checking and then externally with the local cluster of schools. Links have been developed with the main feeder middle school to ensure a common understanding of pupils' levels when they transfer from the first school.

Pupils said they had seen improvements in teaching and in mathematics particularly where lessons are more fun and challenging. They were less keen on religious education and they criticised the quality of some of the supply teaching they had previously experienced.

The school has taken measures to engage boys more in their learning. Boys spoken to during the visit were particularly enthused by the topic of crime and punishment which included role play of a court case. Leaders recognise that writing remains an issue throughout most of the school and will be a key focus for the seconded deputy headteacher. The school has sought to give pupils real life experiences such as a visit to the Cheltenham festival in order to inspire pupils' writing.

Leaders have sought to improve teaching through support, modelling how to ask questions and planning. The impact of teaching assistants is not checked as closely as it is for teachers.

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 has provided significant support to the school as well as brokered support from other schools, for example in arranging for a seconded deputy headteacher post for one term. It monitors the work of the school closely through regularly monthly project board meetings. It has provided extensive support to the Early Years Foundation Stage, Special Educational Needs, teaching and learning and leadership and management and has more days planned for the Spring Term. In addition to checking the work of the school it has provided training.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims
Her Majesty's Inspector