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8 July 2015

Mrs Jane Dark
Headteacher
Victoria Primary School
Cartmel Road
Keighley
West Yorkshire
BD21 2RD

Dear Mrs Dark

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Victoria Primary School, Bradford.

Following my visit to your school on 7 July 2015, 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in February 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

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

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and your deputy headteacher, the leadership team, including middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, pupils and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school action plan. We scrutinised pupils' work in English and mathematics to check on the impact of your actions on improving teaching and pupils' learning.

Context

Since the last monitoring inspection one teacher has been on long-term leave and is due to leave the school at the end of the academic year. You have appointed two teachers; one is a newly qualified teacher.

Main findings

There has been a significant improvement in the way that you are now managing and leading improvements in the school. You have refocused your plans and re-energised yourself, leaders and staff, so that all want to improve teaching and outcomes for pupils. You have raised your expectations of leaders and teachers. All staff, including the children, understand these expectations. Pupils talk about the challenges they are given and how teachers have enhanced their learning.

You and your leaders have re-written the action plan, which focuses precisely on what needs to improve in leadership and teaching. It makes clear what you expect successful outcomes to look like. There are some very clear measurable short-term targets to ensure improvements are rapid and to enable you and the governors to make precise checks on how well the school is doing.

Your systems and procedures for holding leaders and staff to account are much more robust and effective. This means you have eradicated the weakest teaching in school and have forged improvements in teaching at a greater pace than seen previously. This approach has helped to develop a culture of learning and self-reflection amongst staff and ensured they take more responsibility for improving their own teaching.

You have ensured your senior and middle leaders are key players in driving forward improvements in teaching and the curriculum. Through their robust checks, they have an accurate view of teaching and know precisely what needs to improve. They seek and implement bespoke solutions to help teachers and teaching assistants improve their practice. Much of this support is from within school demonstrating the school's capacity to improve. There are tangible improvements in pupils' handwriting and presentation and the quality of pupils' written work. Pupils have more opportunities to reason in mathematics and teachers provide them with challenges that develop their perseverance and deepen their thinking. Pupils say they love the 'head scratchers' that teachers give them in mathematics.

A review of governance has identified many strengths within the governing body, as well as several points for action. These are well underway. Governors are making more robust and precise checks on the school's work and are providing a greater level of challenge than seen previously.

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

External support

You continue to make use of the well-established local partnerships to develop writing, improve the use and accuracy of assessment. For example, strategies to improve basic skills in writing are helping pupils, including the youngest pupils, to make sure their grammar and punctuation is accurate.

The local authority has increased its level of support and challenge. The school improvement officer checks regularly on the improvements leaders are making. She supports you and leaders when undertaking checks on teaching and pupils' work. A specific monitoring group, involving senior officers from the local authority, meets regularly and is holding you to account for the progress the school is making.

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

Yours sincerely

Anne Bowyer

Her Majesty's Inspector