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Mr Andrew Gaunt
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Gaunt

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Greengates Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 3 October 2016, 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 November 2015. 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 last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- increase the impact of strategies to improve disadvantaged pupils' attainment at key stage 1 and key stage 2, the achievement they make from their starting points and their attendance
- iron out the remaining inconsistencies in the impact of teaching and leadership on pupils' learning and progress across year groups and subjects, particularly for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Evidence

During the inspection, discussions were held with you and the deputy headteacher, three members of the governing body and a local authority representative. I spoke to pupils, and scrutinised their work. I also examined documentation relating to the actions the school has taken to tackle the areas requiring improvement, attendance, governance, assessment and pupil progress information. I observed teaching and learning in the school's eight classes, including the Nursery and Reception classes.

Context

The assistant headteacher, who was also the Year 6 class teacher, left the school in July 2016. A replacement has been appointed but is unable to take up post immediately. Since September 2016 the school has been using supply teachers and the deputy headteacher to cover the current Year 6 class. A new chair of the governing body and two additional governors have been appointed recently.

Main findings

The efficiency and effectiveness of the school's leadership and management are improving. This improvement has had a marked effect on the quality of teaching and the breadth of the curriculum. The accuracy of assessment and the rigour of monitoring procedures have also been enhanced. As a result of these developments, the majority of pupils are making faster progress. Staff are being held more accountable for the effectiveness of their work; pupils are being engaged more actively in their learning. In addition, pupils who are at risk of underachieving or falling behind are being identified and supported more quickly. The majority of the areas identified for improvement are being successfully tackled and there are coherent plans in place to address the remaining issues, although time will tell how successful these will be. You are aware that potential threats to the school's continued improvement include the makeshift arrangements for teaching and learning in Year 6 and the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Nevertheless, the school has unequivocally 'turned the corner' and is visibly improving.

Observations of teaching and learning, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's performance information indicate that pupils' learning and progress are accelerating. Expectations of what pupils are capable of are rising. Work is more challenging, particularly in mathematics, and pupils have opportunities to acquire, apply and begin to master knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of subjects. Staff are largely adhering to the school's marking and feedback policy which is supporting pupils to make better progress. The school has invested heavily in support staff and resources for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. You acknowledge that there needs to be an even greater impact from this investment. You also accept that there remains a degree of inconsistency in the impact of teaching, for example where staff do not ensure pupils fully understand

what is expected of them or where pupils are given work that is too easy or too hard. Similarly, you acknowledge that, on occasion, the assessment of homework could be more robust and meaningful.

The provisional key stage 1 and key stage 2 outcomes in 2016 are favourable overall. For example, the proportion of key stage 2 pupils who met the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was 6% higher than the provisional national average. However, this is counterbalanced by the weaker performance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are significant differences between the proportions of these pupils reaching expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics and the others. The school's assessment information indicates that, over the past 12 months, the majority of year groups have made accelerated progress towards their respective targets. This must continue if they are to reach their potential, especially for those groups such as Year 3 who need to catch up as a result of their prior underachievement.

There are tangible improvements in the quality and impact of provision in the early years, with more effective teaching ensuring that a higher than average proportion of children reached a good level of development in 2016. There is some evidence that the most able children are being routinely challenged. This was evident in the outdoor area, which has doubled in size since the previous inspection, and now has some good provision for children to acquire, develop and consolidate their mathematical skills. Collectively, this is helping to ensure that more children are ready for the next stage of their learning when they transfer to Year 1.

Pupils' punctuality and the overall rate of attendance are improving. However, despite your best efforts, the rate of persistent absence has risen over time. You accept that the school needs to become more effective in improving the attendance of a small but hard-to-reach minority of pupils who are skewing your overall figures.

The school does not follow the Department for Education guidance on what maintained schools must publish online, notably in relation to the pupil premium.

Members of the governing body are well qualified to challenge and support the school's improvement and do so shrewdly. Their loyalty is tempered by a recognition that the journey to becoming a good school is far from complete. The outcomes for some groups remain inhibiting factors. Governors know that, as the appropriate authority, it is incumbent upon them to test out periodically the extent to which parents and carers are being actively engaged in supporting their children's learning and attendance.

Until further notice the school should email a termly progress report to me. The school should also forward a copy of the pupil premium review it commissioned as it was not made available to HMI during the monitoring inspection.

External support

The local authority is facilitating effective support and challenge which is helping the school to tackle the areas requiring improvement more quickly. The achievement officer linked to the school is robustly monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's work and her evaluative feedback and recommendations are frank and insightful. She has commissioned the headteacher from the outstanding Bankfoot Primary School to work with senior leaders and this is increasing the efficiency, rigour, urgency and impact of the school's strategic leadership.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bradford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Young
Senior Her Majesty's Inspector