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11 December 2012

Mr Jeremy Harris
Hatchell Wood Primary School
Plumpton Park Road
Bessacar
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN4 6SL

Dear Mr Harris

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Hatchell Wood Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 10 December 2012, 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 October 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority. School action plans were evaluated and documents recording performance management objectives and the outcomes of monitoring activities were examined.

Context

There have been no significant changes since the October inspection.

Main findings

Since the inspection leaders have revised the school improvement plan by adding objectives relevant to the areas for improvement identified at the inspection. It does not include the current rates of pupil progress as a baseline, and does not specify

how the rates of progress should improve each term to meet the school's targets. The plan does not include specific activities, timescales and intended outcomes from the school's 'Achievement for All' project to raise the attainment of lower achieving pupils. These would help staff and governors to check the improvement made in each year group and by different groups of pupils, including those involved in extra activities to improve their skills in reading and mathematics.

Action plans for mathematics are based on a reflective analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. In English, plans to improve the teaching of letters and sounds, and pupils' accuracy in writing, are in place. The planned evaluation of these developments has sharper focus as a result of a middle leader's involvement in a professional development course. Plans to develop reading comprehension are at an early stage of development. Lesson observation by senior leaders has been adjusted to focus explicitly on the learning by pupils at different levels of ability. An audit of marking has led to greater consistency in written feedback to pupils.

The governing body has discussed the outcome of the Ofsted inspection and a sub-committee is due to discuss the revised school improvement plan. Governors know the school well and receive regular reports from the headteacher. They do not have a sufficiently sharp focus on the performance of the different groups that the school has targeted for improvement.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to:

- refine the improvement plan by incorporating measures and milestones for the progress made by year groups and by the groups the school has targeted for making faster progress
- sharpen governors' understanding of the performance of the pupils targeted for making faster progress.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority considers that the school no longer needs support for planning and evaluation. The school is involved in the 'Achievement for All' programme. This has helped the school to focus on the needs of lower ability pupils and develop better dialogue with parents. The school has made a link with a local school to develop a more creative curriculum with greater pupil involvement. In addition, the headteacher is linked with this school in a programme run by the National College of School Leadership to raise achievement. The plan for this is about to be agreed.

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

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority
- the academy chain where relevant
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- The lead inspector.