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10 December 2012

Ms Evelyn Abram
Headteacher
Sharrow Nursery, Infant and Junior School
Sitwell Road
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S7 1BE

Dear Ms Abram

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Sharrow Nursery, Infant and Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 7 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, deputy headteachers, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated and a range of other documentations were reviewed.

Context

Since the October inspection, five people have been appointed to the governing body. A member of staff has been appointed as Special Needs Coordinator.

Main findings

The new headteacher has written an action plan linked closely to the issues identified in the October inspection. It also includes an additional priority around the teaching of mathematics. This was identified as a result of senior leaders conducting whole school monitoring checks after the inspection. The plan states clearly how pupil progress will be measured and who is responsible for each priority area. There are some time-related milestones within the plan, but these timed checks are not happening frequently enough and some actions, for example how improvements in the quality of teaching will improve the progress for all groups of pupils, are rather vague.

All teachers now have individual targets that relate directly to improving pupils' progress. Senior leaders check teaching regularly, they look at pupils' books and provide clear feedback to individual teachers. Open dialogue and discussion is being embedded throughout the school with staff meetings clearly focused on showing how the quality of teaching must be improved.

Members of the governing body meet regularly to discuss pupils' progress and to receive information from senior leaders. Governors ask detailed questions and are aware of the need to make improvements quickly. New governors are being encouraged to shadow a number of meetings so that they are familiar with the school and the quality of education provided.

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 recommend that further action is taken to:

- improve the action plan to include more frequent numerical targets in order to check the impact of the actions already in place and their effect on the progress of all pupils
- embed, reflect and consider the impact of the external support and internal initiatives taken this term and what are the next steps towards improvement.

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

External support

The headteacher has quickly developed links with various education agencies to provide support, to strengthen leadership and to improve the quality of teaching. Staff from Sharrow School have visited other schools within the local authority and have enrolled on leadership courses. They welcome this work and how they are able to improve their practice as a result. The Chair of the Governing Body has made contact with the national college of governance with a view of improving the quality of governance within the school. It is too early to comment on the impact of this work. Local authority officers maintain a close eye on the school through regular meetings with leaders and to check that actions taken are having the desired effect.

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

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector