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Ms Kate McGee
Manor Primary School
Richardson Road
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Dear Ms McGee

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Manor Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 25 September 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 2015.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order to become a good school. The school should take immediate action to:

- ensure that all actions in the school development plan are fully implemented to increase capacity and sustain the recent changes
- ensure that the analysis of information on pupils' behaviour takes into consideration the different groups of pupils.

Evidence

During the monitoring inspection, meetings were held with you, other senior and middle leaders, a group of teachers and teaching assistants, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, representatives from the school council and a representative from the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated. I scrutinised a range of documentation which included: minutes of governors' meetings, behaviour logs and new planning proforma, records of the monitoring of teaching and a review of governance. You accompanied me on a tour of classes to see pupils at work in all year groups. Together, we looked at the quality of marking and pupils' work.

Context

Since the last inspection, 50% of the teaching staff resigned. New teachers, including three newly qualified teachers and a Key Stage 1 coordinator, have been appointed to the vacant positions. The governing body has reconstituted and, following the resignation of the Chair of the Governing Body for personal reasons, the Vice-Chair is expected to take over this responsibility this term.

Main findings

Discussions with you and other leaders indicate that, although you were all disappointed with the inspection outcomes, you have accepted the school's position and are increasingly focused on school improvement. My discussions with staff and the local authority adviser confirmed that everyone is working as a team and there is 'determination to do whatever it takes to drive the school forward'. Staff are clear that you have raised their expectations; these are now explicit. They also explained that the support from you and other senior leaders is helping them to maintain a sharp focus on the priorities. As a result of the increased focus on school improvement and accountability, a few staff considered their position and left at the end of last term.

The middle leaders have begun to monitor the actions for improvement and are using the planned schedule to identify the effectiveness of actions taken. It is, however, too early to evaluate the full impact of the actions. Nevertheless, the quality of marking shows a big improvement. Teachers are giving pupils constructive comments on how they can improve their work and there is emphasis on ensuring that pupils are spelling, punctuating and using grammatical features accurately. Pupils have noticed these changes.

Your plans to drive improvement took into consideration the high turnover of teachers. Rightly, you have ensured that the plan was constructed and ready for implementing when all staff were in post. The school's action plan covers all of the weaknesses with appropriate milestones to identify the success of actions taken. The action plan includes clear and ambitious targets to accelerate pupils' progress. While the plan is fit for purpose, you have not included a baseline for measuring the quality of teaching linked to pupils' progress.

You are clear that consistency of practice is necessary and are seeking to address the weaknesses identified through training and development for staff. Middle leaders have embraced the opportunities to network with various groups. You have also changed the approach to teaching mathematics by providing more practical resources. You explained that mastery of mathematical skills is being emphasised. Pupils who spoke about their work were clear that they like the new approach as they find it easier to understand the work. In comparison, they indicated that English is harder because they do not always have the vocabulary to understand comprehension. Furthermore, they also indicated that writing interesting sentences

accurately takes time. You have responded to this by placing more emphasis on teachers using displays to support learning. Again, pupils told me that they use the displays and pictorial images to help them when they are working.

The school's monitoring files on teaching and behaviour show that you have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. New systems have been introduced to monitor and record teachers' planning and marking. The new marking scheme is being used regularly by staff and they are ensuring that pupils are responding to their comments. Teachers spoken to report that the planning and feedback, combined with professional development, are contributing to them developing their practice. The new behaviour form means you have a clearer track record of the different types of bullying and other forms of unacceptable behaviour. You are aware that at this stage your analysis of poor behaviour does not refer to different groups of pupils. The plan does not reflect how the curriculum is used to tackle unacceptable behaviour.

The governing body has acted quickly to commission the external review of governance. Governors have an appropriate action plan and they are clear about the strategic direction of the school. Areas of responsibilities are clearly defined and there is emphasis on covering all of the statutory duties. The Vice-Chair, an experienced educationalist, is committed to improving the school and has identified the skills all governors need to hold you and other leaders to account.

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

The local authority has been instrumental in brokering support that is focused on the needs of the school. Training programmes, commissioning the review of governance and safeguarding have all been helpful in driving the recent changes. You have worked with the local authority to identify helpful mentoring and support from a national leader in education. The local authority is relentless in its approach to working with you and your staff. Consequently, regular meetings between the Project Board and you with other senior leaders, including governors, ensure that you are all held to account for the impact of changes made.

This letter will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Newham local authority.

Yours sincerely

Carmen Rodney
Her Majesty's Inspector