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Mr Robert Hullett
Interim Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hullett

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Raine's Foundation School

Following my visit to your school on 06 May 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:

- develop performance tracking systems so that progress can be identified accurately by all teachers, and actions put in place quickly to tackle gaps in performance between groups of pupils
- ensure that the next phase of development in teaching and learning moves on at a rapid pace to improve the quality of teaching.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the interim headteacher, other senior leaders, middle leaders, members of the governing body including the chair of governors, and the local authority representative to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I examined the single central record and checked the school's process for staff recruitment. I observed pupils' behaviour at break time. I watched learning in lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke informally to them in visits to lessons with the assistant headteacher responsible for teaching and learning. A range of documentation was considered. This included the school improvement plan, current assessment information, the minutes of governing body meetings, behaviour monitoring information, the school's data from learning walks, documentation from staff training and examples of good practice in feedback to pupils.

Context

Since the last inspection, the headteacher has resigned and been replaced by an interim headteacher from within the school. The governing body resigned following the section 5 inspection and a new governing body has been in place since January 2016 which includes capable and experienced educationalists from the local authority and the London Diocesan Board for Schools. A lead practitioner for teaching and learning has recently been appointed and a new head of mathematics will join the school in September.

Main findings

School leaders have managed the inevitable disruption caused by the resignation of the headteacher and the complete change to the governing body well. Working with the governors, the interim headteacher has clarified the school's priorities and created a clear improvement plan with key milestones. Senior leaders and governors speak of an absolute focus on school improvement. They have agreed a new allocation of senior responsibilities. Both the senior team and the middle leaders have been given targets which are specific and measurable. As a result, there is a significant increase in accountability. The governors have established a targeted intervention group which meets monthly. This is a small group of governors with a high level of educational experience and skills. As a result, they have been able to bring about change rapidly. For example, considerable organisational decisions are being made which will support improvements to the school, including bringing Years 7 to 11 together on one site.

Since the last inspection, the school has changed its approach to gathering and analysing assessment information. The process is now more regular and focuses more tightly on the gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others, and those pupils at the margins of grade boundaries at GCSE level. All departments have a target for expected progress which, if achieved, would put them in line with

that achieved nationally. According to the school's data, the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others are closing for the current year 11 in English and maths. However, significant gains are still to be made. In other year groups, major gaps remain between the levels of progress of different groups of pupils. Furthermore, the middle leaders acknowledge that performance information is not currently used in daily teaching and learning by class teachers. Consequently there is a lack of precision in the pitching of work in some lessons. The school must take urgent action to get these groups back on track if it is to be judged good at the next inspection.

There has been significant work on behaviour for learning since the last inspection. A working party of staff and pupils wrote and launched a new anti-bullying policy in February. This provides greater clarity and consistency in preventing and tackling bullying across the school. Pupils and parents have responded very positively to the new policy. The deputy headteacher who leads on this area has also established a raft of other interventions to support pastoral care at the school. For example, a child and adolescent mental health worker now visits the school weekly. Disruptive behaviour is tracked extremely well and analysed at senior leadership team meetings. Some groups have shown improvement following interventions. However, there is further work to be done in this area if the school is to achieve a judgement of good for behaviour at the next section 5 inspection.

Leaders display an unrelenting focus on ensuring minimum standards for pupils' presentation of work in books and on the provision of helpful feedback by teachers. Increased monitoring activities have resulted in much-improved consistency in these areas. A 'corporate style' for the start of lessons, which includes clearly differentiated tasks, is also becoming embedded. The assistant headteacher who leads on teaching and learning, and the governors are aware of the areas of good practice and those which require further development. However, having set up and established the basics, the school must now look beyond this and develop excellence across all aspects of classroom practice by using the identified lead practitioners to drive change across subject areas.

External support

Since the last inspection, there has been significant support from the new governing body. There has been a deliberate decision not to draw in other external support because of the high level of expertise provided by the members of the governing body, and to ensure that there are clear messages about priorities. This is a sensible rationale. However, the school could consider some further support to develop its internal tracking systems more quickly if sufficient progress is to be made by the next inspection.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education

for the Diocese of London, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Tower Hamlets. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Victoria Linsley
Associate Inspector