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Joanne Baker and Louise Knibbs
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Dear Miss Baker and Mrs Knibbs

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lakeside Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 8 May 2017, 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 October 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its section 5 inspection before the one that took place in October 2015, the school was also judged to require improvement.

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.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the joint acting headteachers, members of the governing body, the leaders for the early years and for mathematics, and representatives of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I made a series of visits to lessons, accompanied by the joint acting headteachers, observing the pupils, looking at their work and discussing it with them. Also, I met with a

group of pupils. I looked at a sample of pupils' mathematics work from key stage 1. I looked also at the latest information held by the school about the progress of the pupils, at safeguarding records, and at a range of other documents on the school's website.

Context

Since the inspection in October 2015, the headteacher has left the school and the school has been led by two joint acting headteachers. An executive headteacher will take charge of the school shortly, having been appointed a few days before this inspection. There have been several changes in leadership responsibilities at the school. The composition of the governing body has changed and there is a new chair and vice-chair.

Main findings

The latest information held by the school about the progress and attainment of the pupils indicates that there has been a significant improvement in the proportions of pupils working at the level expected for their ages. The proportions are notably higher currently than they were previously, including in the early years. This is particularly important, given the relatively high proportion of pupils who enter the school with starting points well below those typical for children of their age and also the high proportion entering the school part-way through their education. The differences in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils compared with others are reducing, though still very apparent. The pupils' work shows steady gains in learning. The pupils' progress is supported effectively by systematic and carefully considered approaches to setting work.

The pupils' books are well kept and, in large part, show care with presentation and handwriting. The school has improved its approach to assessing how well the pupils are doing. The approach it has adopted provides the teachers with a clearer and more accurate view of what the pupils are doing well and where they are struggling than was the case previously. Consequently, the teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve have risen. That in turn is helping the teachers to set work for the pupils that is suitably demanding of them.

You and the staff have taken effective action to improve the teaching of mathematics. The pupils are very aware of the improvements that have been made and described to me how the improvements were helping them to learn more. You have increased significantly the amount of time available for the pupils to improve their mental recall. Mathematics tasks are now set routinely around problems to be solved, including in the early years. The children in the early years are given more opportunities now to talk about the mathematics they are doing. That is helping both with the children's understanding of mathematics and with the development of their speaking skills.

The teachers have benefited from useful training and development opportunities that have helped them to improve the teaching of mathematics. The amount of well-informed discussion among the staff has also increased, which is supporting the spread of effective ways of teaching the subject.

The governing body is now exerting significant influence and this is increasing the pace of improvement at the school. The external reviews of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium funding have been completed. Both have led to purposeful changes in ways of working. The governing body works closely with the senior leaders to monitor the work of the school. Discussions between the governors and the senior leaders are based on evidence collected through a programme of suitable activities. The resulting dialogue about how well the school and the pupils are doing is, accordingly, well informed, robust and leads to further actions.

Much remains to be done. The school has needed to spend a lot of time working through some challenging changes and issues. As a result, the improvements that I have seen are recent. Between them, the senior leaders, the governing body and the local authority are securing foundations for the long-term improvement of the school, but the task has not been completed.

External support

Direct and timely action by the local authority has been crucial in stimulating the better pace of improvement that is now evident at the school. It has been instrumental in ensuring that the external reviews of governance and of the use of the pupil premium were completed and in strengthening the governing body. It has provided effective support to improve the effectiveness of leadership at the school and provided assistance with the improvements in mathematics teaching and in the early years.

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

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss
Her Majesty's Inspector