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Mr David Nightingale
Moorfield Community Primary School
Cutnook Lane
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Dear Mr Nightingale

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Moorfield Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 October 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received three successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- build upon the work done in reading, writing and mathematics to ensure that staff consistently implement the agreed ambitious plans in other subjects.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and your deputy headteacher, the subject leaders for English, science, mathematics and geography, three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

I visited classrooms to see teachers and pupils at work. I scrutinised pupils' workbooks. I spoke with parents and carers at the start of the school day. I spoke with members of staff. I looked at information and records regarding the safeguarding of pupils, their attendance and exclusion.

Context

Since the last inspection, a new deputy headteacher has been appointed. She took up her position from September 2019. Additionally, two newly qualified teachers have started in school since September 2019. There has been some staff absence due to illness.

Main findings

The school has required improvement for some time. Your committed leadership of the school is at last making a difference. You, leaders and governors have worked diligently to set a clear course for improvement. Plans for this improvement are moving the school forward at a pace. As a result, pupils now receive a better standard of education. You know that the journey for the school to be judged good is not yet complete and further work is still required.

You established a new leadership structure so that all staff have clear lines of responsibility. This means that you now hold subject leaders closely to account for the impact of their work.

Governors have restructured their committees. This means that meetings are run more efficiently. Governors receive better information about the work of the school and are able to make more effective decisions. Governors hold leaders closely to account for the impact of their actions.

The appointment of a new deputy headteacher has strengthened the leadership of the school. Her appointment has brought extra capacity to the senior leadership team. She has hit the ground running and is effectively leading appropriate improvement actions. These include the promotion of the love of reading within families of early years and key stage 1 pupils. To aid this, she has established a free lending library. This is in a new 'book shed' in the entrance to the school.

Well-constructed development plans identify the correct improvement priorities. These plans are working documents. They are frequently reviewed by senior leaders to keep track of what works and what does not. You share your high expectations clearly with all staff. Effective performance management systems are in place for all staff. These are used to hold teachers and learning support assistants closely to account for the quality of their work. Staff performance objectives align with the priorities in the school development plan. Carefully chosen training is matched to school development priorities. This helps staff improve the quality of education that pupils receive.

Subject leadership in the school has improved. Subject leaders know what is expected of them. They have secure subject knowledge. They also are developing their leadership skills because of the training you arrange. This training includes opportunities for them to work alongside specialist leaders in education. They learn from training given by other subject and curriculum experts. Subject leaders and teachers benefit from visits to other schools to learn from good practice. Subject leaders of mathematics and English have benefited from additional leadership training. This training is now being provided to the leaders of other subjects. Subject leaders use the training they get to good effect. For example, subject leaders of geography and science have evaluated clearly the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects' curriculum design. They have identified gaps in resources and taken appropriate actions. Consequently, teachers have access to the right equipment to be able to teach each subject. Subject leaders also use their improved leadership skills to routinely check that the curriculum is working in class so that pupils learn more. They report their findings to the governing body with growing confidence.

The quality of education that pupils receive is improving. You have completed your redesign of the curriculum. The national curriculum forms the basis of your design. It provides staff with clear expectations about what should be taught in each year group. Ambitious plans for mathematics and English are fully in place. Training in English, mathematics and science means that teachers are confident and competent in teaching these subjects. Pupils improve their knowledge and understanding because teaching builds on what they already know. However, sometimes, teachers try to teach too much at once. When this happens, activities lose focus and pupils' learning slows.

Your investment in extra teaching resources means that pupils have the equipment they need. These include new sets of whole-class reading texts. You have also bought extra mathematics and science equipment. This means that pupils have the right equipment to help them to learn. In subjects other than English and mathematics, you have a clear plan of how you will put in place the new curriculum design. However, it is not yet complete. You know that this is an urgent priority to ensure a better quality of education for pupils.

Pupils' attainment and progress in key stage 2 national assessments were in line with national averages. Pupils' attainment in key stage 1 national assessments was also in line with national averages. This was an improvement on 2018. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils are getting a better quality of education. Learning activities build on what pupils know already. Activities are interesting and carefully matched to pupils' abilities. For example, in science in Year 6, pupils study the work of Charles Darwin when looking at how animals adapt to their habitats. Teachers seize opportunities to help pupils learn about the wider world. This is often done through visits to places like the Lowry Theatre and the underground museum in Salford. Pupils told me that these trips help them learn more about culture and history in their community and beyond. Pupils' phonics skills are developing well.

Teachers take every opportunity to model the correct use of language and extend pupils' vocabulary across all subjects.

You and your staff know that good behaviour is the cornerstone of pupils getting the best out of school. During the inspection, pupils were polite and concentrated on their work. Pupils told me that behaviour has improved and that most pupils are good in school. They also said that, at times, a few pupils are not that well behaved. This can disrupt learning. You have worked with staff to introduce a new behaviour policy. This policy focuses on rewarding good behaviour. It sets clear expectations of what is acceptable and what is not. Pupils are keen to receive their green stickers for good behaviour and told me, 'It's good to be green.' When behaviour is not acceptable, there are clear sanctions that you use. These include the use of exclusion when behaviour is extreme or poses danger to pupils or others. You use this sanction appropriately. When you use it, you keep meticulous records of the reasons why you have excluded a pupil and the length of the exclusion.

External support

The local authority provides appropriate support and challenge for the school. This includes providing appropriate guidance about curriculum design and the development of subject leadership. It includes organising appropriate professional advice relating to complex staffing issues. The local authority carefully monitors the impact of the support that they provide.

School leaders effectively draw upon the support and guidance of external education experts to help them to provide a better quality of education for their pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

John Nixon
Her Majesty's Inspector