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9 October 2017

Mr Richard Harrison
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Harrison

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Market Weighton School

Following my visit to your school on 25 September 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 May 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

At its section 5 inspection before the one that took place in June 2014, 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 for the school to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning further by making sure that all teachers use pupil information consistently to ensure that activities are suitably challenging
- ensure that teaching and learning continue to be evaluated with rigour so that such activities contribute to improving standards and pupils' outcomes, paying particular attention to raising standards in mathematics and history.

Evidence

During the visit, I met with you and members of your senior leadership team to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection and their influence on pupils' outcomes. Meetings were also held with a group of Year 7 and Year 9 pupils, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I evaluated the school self-evaluation document and the school development plan, alongside a range of other documents. These documents included the single central record, minutes of governors' meetings and information about the monitoring of teaching and learning. I visited different classes with you and your deputy headteacher to observe teaching and learning. I spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at the work in their books in a detailed work scrutiny. I also considered the 30 parents' responses on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the senior leadership team has been restructured. This took place in April 2016, with the retirement of the previous deputy headteacher, and there are now four assistant headteachers and a seconded deputy headteacher in post. The restructuring allowed for greater clarity in roles and responsibilities and has brought about increased leadership capacity at senior level.

The external review of governance took place in April 2017 and the external review of the pupil premium is due to take place this term.

Main findings

You, other leaders and governors have high aspirations for the school and for the staff and pupils. Consequently, you have made a positive start in addressing the areas identified as needing improvement in the previous inspection. New appointments and the realignment of senior leaders' roles have brought about clarity and they all speak with confidence and determination about the areas for which they have responsibility.

Governors now have an increased awareness of the effectiveness of the school as they link more closely with the school's work. Committees have been realigned so that governors' expertise and skills are used to their best advantage, and as a consequence, governors are better informed and they confidently challenge leaders to support improvements. You and governors have ensured that policies are clear for staff and that staff are aware of the rationale behind the implementation of policies, for example, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and the behaviour for learning policies.

Your main focus area has been around improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, you and other leaders have worked hard to ensure that monitoring activities are rigorous and that the information you glean from such activities gives a holistic view of the school and each subject area. A weekly, planned set of monitoring activities has given you and other leaders an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses across the school. Your thorough school development plan clearly defines the actions for improvement and the areas that remain a concern.

Staff are now challenged more effectively and support plans are put in place for those staff that are not performing at the school's expected standard. Staff are appreciative of the opportunities they are given to work together so that they can share good practice, try out new ideas and have productive discussions around the demands of the new curriculum changes. Nevertheless, you have acknowledged that there is still work to do around using the monitoring information to evaluate pupils' learning and progress across each subject area, particularly in relation to pupils' experiences and outcomes in mathematics and history.

You have introduced a new system to assess pupils' progress, especially at key stage 3. This is to improve standards of teaching and learning, but also to ensure staff that are assessing pupils' learning and progress accurately. Staff are becoming increasingly confident when using this information because it allows them to complete an analysis of pupils' knowledge and understanding of key topics. When used effectively, such analysis gives teachers the opportunity to plan learning that plugs pupils' knowledge gaps and not allow them to fall behind. Where this is being used effectively, for example in science, learning is planned to meet the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils and challenge them adequately. You are aware that there is still some work to do so that all teachers are using this information consistently to plan learning that challenges all groups of pupils.

Since the previous inspection, the school has used additional funding to implement effective literacy programmes to support pupils who enter the school with low reading skills. As a result of these targeted and well-planned support programmes, pupils' reading skills have improved, as has their confidence and ability to access other subjects on offer.

Pupils, in the main, show positive attitudes to learning and enjoy their time at school. Pupils are prepared for their lessons and they move around the school site in a calm and orderly fashion. Pupils feel safe and they are well supervised by staff. The school's behaviour for learning system has brought about greater consistency both in and outside lessons. Pupils said that staff, in the main, followed the consequences system appropriately and when needed. They also said that rewards for pupils were awarded for the right reasons and when appropriate.

External support

The local authority has and continues to provide effective support for you and other leaders and governors. It has provided timely, well-planned support, challenge and guidance. A seconded deputy headteacher from a local school has increased capacity within the senior leadership team and the school as a whole. She has provided effective support in improving the monitoring of teaching and learning. Overall, external support provided has improved leadership, pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

The external review of governance was well received and as a result governors are asking challenging questions and ensuring that action points are checked for impact at subsequent meetings.

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

Yours sincerely

Darren Stewart
Her Majesty's Inspector