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3 July 2013

Jane Haggitt
Hanwell Fields Community School
Rotary Way
Banbury
OX16 1ER

Dear Mrs. Haggitt,

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hanwell Fields Community School

Following my visit to your academy on 3 July 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in May 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with two deputy headteachers, academy staff, the Primary Director of the United Learning Trust, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The academy improvement plan was evaluated and the inspector also looked at documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the academy's work. The inspector also accompanied the deputy headteachers on a tour around the academy visiting a number of classrooms.

Context

I was not able to meet you during this visit as you were on sick leave. During your absence the academy has been led by your two deputy headteachers. There have been no changes to staffing, pupil numbers or the governing body since the previous inspection.

Main findings

Academy leaders have responded positively to the findings of the previous inspection. The academy improvement plan has been suitably amended so that it addresses all the areas for improvement identified in the report. The plan contains sensible strategies that will help to improve the academy. Your two deputy headteachers have led the implementation of this plan well during your absence and they have the support of staff.

The improvement plan has an appropriate focus on improving the quality of teaching in the academy. Lesson observations are beginning to have a greater focus on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and appropriate training is being arranged to improve teachers' practice. However, the action plan does not contain clear, measurable targets for how the quality of teaching is expected to improve over the next 18 months.

Systems to involve pupils in checking the quality of their work, particularly in mathematics, have developed well since the previous inspection. There has also been a greater focus on providing pupils with more opportunities to use their calculation skills to solve problems. Systems to track the progress of pupils are developing well and good plans are in place to hold class teachers more accountable for pupils' achievement.

The academy behaviour policy has been sensibly reviewed and re-established with all staff in order to promote a greater consistency in the way that behavioural issues are dealt with across the school. The school council and learning ambassadors have also rewritten the policy in their own words so that it is more accessible and more clearly understood by pupils. All incidents of bad behaviour and bullying are now recorded centrally and are beginning to be more effectively analysed to identify patterns and trends.

A number of appropriate strategies have been introduced to more effectively inform parents and carers about what is happening in the academy. For example, school council newsletters are now sent home to parents and carers, a parent council is being established and the school website is being developed to contain a section that will provide information to parents and carers. A recent survey of parents' and carers' indicates some improvement in their views of behaviour and safety issues in the academy. However, some concerns remain and these still need to be addressed.

Governors are ambitious for the academy. As reported at the previous inspection, they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the academy and they have been appropriately involved in developing the academy improvement plan. However, the plan does not make it sufficiently clear how governors will be involved in evaluating the impact of actions taken.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- set clear and measurable targets for the expected quality of teaching for at least the next 18 months
- strengthen the academy's improvement plan by clearly identifying the role of governors in evaluating the impact of the actions taken
- regularly review parental views so that the impact of actions to inform and involve parents in what is happening in the academy can be evaluated.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The Primary Director of the United Learning Trust makes regular visits to the academy. They have a clear understanding of the academy's strengths and weaknesses and provide robust support and challenge. Some effective support has been given to leaders in the development of their improvement plan and for the leadership and management of the school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Oxfordshire.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sanderson
Her Majesty's Inspector