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Mrs Harriett Simcox
Head of School
Pegasus Primary School
Turnhouse Road
Castle Vale
Birmingham
West Midlands
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Dear Mrs Simcox

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Pegasus Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 11 October 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring 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 2017. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders, governors and Ninestiles Academy Trust 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 ensure that:

- all teaching across school is at least good
- initiatives that have been introduced become embedded to ensure improved outcomes
- the most able pupils are challenged in all lessons by staff using skilled questioning to deepen their understanding.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, the governing body and representatives from the trust to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plans were evaluated, a number of classroom visits were made and book scrutinies took place.

Context

There have been a number of significant staff changes since the last inspection, including your appointment. However, the leadership team has been strengthened by the appointment of an executive head on an interim basis. An individual governing body has been established in order to challenge and support the school on its school improvement journey.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection, you and other leaders have responded with understanding and urgency to the judgement that the school requires improvement. You and your executive headteacher have been determined to create a culture of ambition and aspiration, both for the staff and the pupils. All pupils are encouraged to achieve in a caring, well-disciplined environment. As a result, outcomes are improving.

Leaders at all levels are new to their role. However, they are already extremely knowledgeable and know what needs to be done further to drive standards in their specific areas. Action plans are focused and the drive and enthusiasm of these leaders are infectious, and already the impact of their work is evident.

Members of the newly established governing body have already made visits to the school, including looking at books and visiting classrooms in order to check on the progress that pupils are making. Governors state that already they have seen improvements in books and the learning environment, which is having a positive impact on the school community.

You and your leaders have correctly identified that problem-solving and reasoning need to improve in mathematics. Training has been provided and is still ongoing. However, due to the inexperience of some staff, there are still some inconsistencies. Where teaching is strong, work planned matches pupils' abilities and progress is evident. Where teaching is weaker, the most able pupils are not being effectively challenged, which means they are not making the progress of which they are capable. The recent introduction of 'effective maths' is giving pupils more opportunities to articulate their mathematical thinking and, as a result, their reasoning skills are greatly improving. However, problem-solving is still an area that needs to be further embedded.

You have implemented a clear tracking system, which allows you to keep detailed information about different groups of pupils and the progress that they make. You use this information well to evaluate the school's effectiveness and the quality of teaching. You share this information with teachers, who now have much clearer information about pupils' starting points, next steps and any gaps in pupils' learning. Information is also used skilfully to design a curriculum to meet the needs of the Castle Vale pupils. The pupils have assisted in the design of this creative and enriched curriculum, which is now more broad, balanced and relevant to them. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about their learning and particularly enjoy the Friday afternoon enrichment activities.

Book scrutiny demonstrated that pupils' presentation, including handwriting, has greatly improved since the last inspection. Pupils are now using basic skills more accurately, and spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct.

Dramatic changes have been seen in the early years since the section 5 inspection. You have appointed a new leader, who is a highly skilled and dedicated practitioner and is determined to make sure that children have the best possible start in Reception. She uses a range of assessment to find the starting points of these children and to ensure they have the correct support in order for them to achieve their best. The learning environment both indoors and outdoors supports children's learning, resulting in the majority of children making improved progress. She has worked extremely hard with parents in order for them to be able to help their children learn at home. Due to the welcoming nature of this leader and other adults in Reception, all parents attended the most recent workshop.

External support

Since the section 5 inspection, Ninestiles Academy Trust has provided effective support in mathematics and leadership and management, strengthening the leadership in those areas. A pupil premium review has taken place and a clear action plan has been produced. Governors are now in place and are regularly monitoring and evaluating the progress that the school is making.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kate Brunt
Ofsted Inspector