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18 December 2012

Mr Joel Marshall
St Oswald's CofE Primary School
Sion Avenue
Kidderminster
DY10 2YL

Dear Mr Marshall

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to St Oswald's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 17 December 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on 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 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 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the senior and middle leaders, the school council, a group of parents, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan, the minutes of the meetings of the governing body, lesson observation records and information relating to performance management were evaluated.

Context

There have been no changes in context since the inspection in October.

Main findings

The school's senior leaders have promptly taken action to address the issues raised at the recent inspection. Staff and parents welcomed the greater team work that is evident in school. Steps have been taken to improve the transition of children into Year 1 and roles and responsibilities have been clarified in order to ensure all non-

teaching staff are more effectively deployed. Middle and senior leaders are more involved in evaluating teaching and are beginning to use assessment data more effectively for this purpose. Teachers are beginning to set higher expectations but the school recognises that there is more to do to ensure pupils have the opportunity to achieve these, particularly in mathematics. Pupils enjoyed the interesting activities they undertook in their recent 'Inspire' week and would like more opportunities of this kind.

The school has recognised that the lack of involvement of a minority of parents is a barrier to improvement, particularly for pupils eligible for pupil premium. All leaders, including the governing body recognise that more work is needed to ensure that assessment data is used more effectively to hold teachers to account. The school is sensibly using termly targets related to pupil achievement in its performance management so that more robust data can be introduced as the earliest opportunity. The school development plan has been amended so that it covers all the issues identified in the recent inspection, although it does not yet contain sufficient quantifiable targets that can be used by governors to evaluate the progress being made

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- At the earliest opportunity finalise a system that ensures the school has a robust assessment data for all groups of pupils, that can be used to hold all staff to account.
- Take steps to ensure all parents and carers support their children in achieving challenging targets.
- Implement a more inspiring curriculum that reinforces pupils learning in English and mathematics

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

Although it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of local authority support the correct decisions have been made about where this should be directed. Termly meeting with governors, the school's senior leaders and representatives of the local authority are being used to ensure there is fully accountability for the improvements being made. The local authority is providing training to ensure all governors understand the relevant data. The headteacher appreciates the regular support he receives from another experienced headteacher. This is helping the school ensure the accuracy of its evaluations of lessons and how best to use assessment information. The headteacher values the support he is receiving from the local authority in dealing with staffing issues.

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

Yours sincerely

Kevin Sheldrick
Her Majesty's Inspector