

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancs Investment Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 0300 1231231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566933
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
ggleaden@cfbt.com



17 January 2013

Mrs Sarah Joynes
Headteacher
Alice Ingham Roman Catholic Primary School
Millgate
Halifax Road
Rochdale
Lancashire
OL16 2NU

Dear Mrs Joynes

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Alice Ingham Roman Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 January 2013, 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 November 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, a foundation governor and two representatives of the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated and a record of monitoring undertaken by the local authority was considered. A brief meeting was held with teachers.

Context

The acting headteacher at the time of the Section 5 inspection has been appointed as the substantive headteacher of the school, with effect from 1 January 2013.

Main findings

During her term as acting headteacher, and in the short time since her permanent appointment, the headteacher has brought vision and energy to the school. She has worked quickly to develop a rigorous system for tracking pupils' progress at regular intervals. As a result, teachers have accurate information regarding pupils' progress and are using this increasingly well to plan lessons that provide pupils with more challenging work. Effective tracking enables underachievement to be more quickly recognised. A dedicated team of teaching assistants provides valuable support to individual pupils who require additional help. Lines of accountability have been reviewed and staff are clear as to how their work will be evaluated. Staff and governors have a shared determination to improve the life chances of their pupils through high quality pastoral care and increasingly good teaching.

The areas for improvement identified in the recent inspection have been accepted by the school and extensive work is being undertaken to improve the quality of teaching in order to accelerate pupils' progress rapidly. The school improvement plan focuses on the correct priorities but does not identify responsibilities, timescales, success criteria and monitoring arrangements with sufficient clarity.

Staff meetings have a consistent focus on enhancing the quality teaching. Improvements have been made to teachers' planning to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. A new school marking policy has been agreed and pupils' books are regularly scrutinised by senior leaders to ensure that this is being implemented consistently and having a positive effect on pupils' learning. The headteacher and assistant headteacher frequently visit lessons and give feedback to staff following these observations. The assistant headteacher provides support to teachers, including through providing demonstration lessons to model good practice. Leaders' evaluations indicate an improving picture across the school although there is still variability in the quality of teaching between classes. Leaders are encouraging teachers to share with each other the aspects of their work that are having the most positive impact on pupils' learning.

The subject leaders for literacy and numeracy have a more prominent role in improving teaching. A detailed action plan is being implemented to give greater consistency to the teaching of literacy. The teaching of mathematics has been reconsidered to focus on building pupils' skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Assessment of pupils' mathematical skills has been sharpened.

The school's governors are well-informed about its work. They visit the school on a regular basis. The Chair of Governors frequently talks to pupils about their learning. The local authority has provided the Governing Body with support to enable it to hold leaders to account; this has included the attendance at governors' meetings of the school improvement officer.

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:

- maintain a strong focus on monitoring the work of the school, including through using Teachers' Standards as the basis of evaluation and performance management.
- present the school improvement plan in such a way that actions are clearly defined with appropriate timelines, responsible personnel and success criteria so that senior leaders and governors can evaluate the impact of their work more easily.

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

External support

The local authority knows the school well and provides it with effective support. This includes the support of the school improvement officer and senior school improvement manager who, in partnership with the headteacher, have undertaken a detailed review of teaching and learning and made clear recommendations. They also check the work of the school's two newly qualified teachers and ensure that they receive appropriate guidance, and ensure that the new headteacher receives professional advice when the need arises. Three advisory teachers have provided staff with support in developing questioning throughout the school and improving teaching and provision of outdoor activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Senior leaders and governors appreciate the rapidity of the local authority's response to the school's requests for advice. Salford Diocese provides support to the new headteacher through its mentoring programme.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Rochdale and the Director of Education for Salford Diocese.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Gornall
Her Majesty's Inspector