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8 February 2013

Mrs A Keywood
St William of Perth Roman Catholic Primary School
Canon Close
Maidstone Road
Rochester
Kent
ME1 3EN

Dear Mrs Keywood

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to St William of Perth Roman Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 8 February 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 and the deputy headteacher 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 and deputy headteacher, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils. The school improvement plan was evaluated and the inspector looked at the school's records of monitoring. The inspector also examined examples of teachers' lesson plans and information on pupils' progress so far this year.

Context

The headteacher has recently returned to work after a period of absence. During this time, the deputy headteacher led the school. She was supported by an external leadership consultant.

Main findings

Following the section 5 inspection, the deputy headteacher worked with the external consultant to draw up a short-term school improvement plan. This enabled the school to start to tackle the areas for improvement quickly. Now that most of the short-term objectives have been achieved, the plan is being reviewed. The current version of the school plan does not have measurable targets, milestones or indicate who is responsible for checking the progress of each action and how they might do this. This means it is difficult for school leaders to judge their success in raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching.

School leaders track and review pupils' progress rigorously. The new electronic tracking system generates useful reports so that school leaders can check the progress of different groups during each academic year and over the four years from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. At present, the governing body does not receive enough detailed information about the progress that pupils' make.

Systems for quality assuring teaching have improved. School leaders gather a wide range of information about strengths and weaknesses in the overall quality of teaching from visits to lessons, checks of pupils' workbooks and scrutiny of teachers' planning. This information has not been collated to provide an overview of the areas for development for each teacher.

The membership of the governing body has changed and some governors are relatively inexperienced. All are keen to develop their role. A local authority adviser has led bespoke training that has helped governors to understand how well pupils at St William of Perth achieve in comparison to other schools nationally.

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:

- include measurable outcomes and milestones for actions in the school improvement plan that help the governing body to judge whether school leaders are being successful in improving achievement
- collate the information gathered from the monitoring of teaching and learning to provide a full overview of each teacher's strengths and areas for development
- summarise information about pupils' progress each term so that it is clear how many pupils in each class are making and exceeding expected progress.

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

External support

The local authority brokered valuable support for the deputy headteacher during the headteacher's absence. The school is making good use of additional tailored support provided by the local authority following the section 5 inspection. The adviser who works with the school has led useful training for the governing body. A local leader of education, who has been commissioned by the local authority, is working with the school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Medway and the Director of Education for the Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Knowles
Her Majesty's Inspector