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8 March 2013

Headteacher  
St Cuthbert with St Matthias CofE Primary School  
Warwick Road  
London  
SW5 9UE

Dear Mr Boatright

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to St Cuthbert with St Matthias CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 8 March 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 December 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, five members of the governing body, a senior adviser from the London Diocesan Board for Schools and an adviser from the local authority. The post-Ofsted action plan, governors' minutes and monitoring of teaching were scrutinised.

### **Context**

Since the section 5 inspection, two senior members of staff have resigned. The leadership of the first key position, English as an additional language coordinator, is being provided by a consultant. The second key post, the deputy headteacher's, will not become vacant until the end of the summer term. The post has been advertised but a suitable candidate has not yet been found. A specialist teacher of English has been employed to provide additional support for high attaining pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. A leadership support package, with outstanding schools, one in the local authority and another in a London borough, has been brokered by senior leaders working with the governors and the local authority.

## **Main findings**

Following the inspection, the school did not dawdle in taking significant action to begin driving improvement. The headteacher has been forthright in making pronouncements about improving the quality of teaching and leadership and management. Senior leaders have readily accepted the tough messages and are increasingly developing their leadership and management skills. A range of support systems have been put into place to develop good practice and increase the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation and accountability at all levels. The school is working closely with the partner primary to shared good practice and develop the leadership skills of middle leaders. The post Ofsted improvement plan is fit for purpose. It provides a clear outline of the school's intention to measure and evaluate its work in the drive to improve pupils' performance.

The governing body is determined to raise standards. There is a strong sense of urgency to move the school forward by eradicating the previously acceptable achievement of being a 'satisfactory school.' Consequently, governors are demanding more from the school. This has led to the Chair of the Governing Body and two other experienced governors forming a strategic challenge committee. Together, they are providing more challenge; demanding convincing evidence on the progress and using commissioned experts to validate the school's work. Governors have a clear understanding of what needs to and have begun to develop their understanding of school effectiveness through partnership work with the outstanding primary school and planned training.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take 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:

- ensure the recent improvements in teaching are sustained to enable pupils to achieve the challenging targets outlined in the post-Ofsted improvement plan.

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

## **External support**

The local authority and London Diocesan Board have been pivotal in supporting the school to move forward. They have used the context and previous history of the school to give leaders some difficult messages which they have responded to positively. Strategic planning is long term and involves targeted training and support for middle leaders to develop their leadership and management skills. The local authority has also provided support through visits from literacy and numeracy coordinators and has ensured that there is a contingency fund for additional support. The adviser from the diocese has been instrumental in supporting governors to begin deciphering assessment data on pupils' performance.

HMI recommends that future visit and contacts with the school will focus on:

- ensuring that middle leaders are well placed to (i) monitor the quality of teaching rigorously and (ii) give clear feedback to staff about the impact of their work on accelerating pupils' progress over time.
- ensuring that governors are proficient in (i) holding the school to account through interrogating data on the progress of all groups of pupils and (ii) gathering and using a range of secondary and first hand evidence to hold the school to account.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Kensington and Chelsea Local Authority and the London Diocesan Board.

Yours sincerely

Carmen Rodney  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**