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20 March 2013

Richard Hatt
Headteacher
Westbury Church of England Junior School
Oldfield Park
Westbury
BA13 3LY

Dear Mr Hatt,

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Westbury Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 20 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 January 2013. 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, a group of pupils and representatives from the governing body. In addition a telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority. HMI also evaluated the school development plan, discussed the management of teachers' performance and read sample reports; reviewed marking in pupils' books and minutes related to the work of the school since the previous Ofsted inspection.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection a teacher who was on maternity leave has returned to work.

Main findings

Following the section 5 inspection the headteacher has secured a greater shared understanding and urgency within the school on raising pupils' achievements, especially in mathematics. Staff have fully accepted the inspection findings and are receiving the support and guidance they require. The headteacher has introduced a range of new school improvement initiatives designed specifically to address the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. For example, a new marking and feedback policy has been successfully adopted and this is already securing greater consistency in the way teachers mark and respond to pupils' work. Pupils say they are developing a better understanding of how well they are doing because teachers' written comments are focused on their next steps in learning.

Training to strengthen teachers' mathematical subject knowledge has been successfully delivered and improvements to the curriculum are now ensuring greater opportunities for pupils to use and apply their developing mathematical skills. However, senior leaders acknowledge that to maintain consistency and rigour and to guard against any slippage in the time allocated to complete initiatives the work of the school has yet to be brought together into one document. In addition the school improvement plan currently lacks clarity because it does not make explicit enough success criteria, or how and by whom the monitoring and evaluation of the school improvement strategies will be carried out. There also remains some confusion in identifying the difference in success criteria and the impact the improvement work is designed to have on raising pupils' attainment.

In order to secure a greater consistency in the quality of teaching leaders have introduced a programme of 'lesson studies', a strategy of sharing planning and delivery of lessons between pairs of teachers. This strategy has been welcomed by teachers as it promotes consistency in teaching and provides regular opportunities for teachers to plan collaboratively; for example, in providing greater challenge for more able pupils in mathematics. Similarly there is greater consistency across the school now in supporting pupils with special educational needs.

Pupils who meet with the inspector were able to speak knowledgeably about their targets and how improvements in the marking of their work was helping them to better understand what they need to do next to improve. As one pupils said, 'Next steps' are working really well for us'.

The governing body is receiving regular updates from the outcomes of the school's rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress. This information ensures governors are much better informed on the work of the school. As a result of the additional training they are receiving governors are beginning to hold the school more effectively to account.

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:

- Bring together in one document the work of the school and in particular the improvement plans of senior leaders, subject leaders and the monitoring work of the governing body
- Ensure the work of the school is placed within a timeline that makes explicit success criteria, the regular monitoring and evaluation of the schools' work and the impact this is having on improving outcomes for pupils.

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

External support

The school continues to benefit from effective guidance and support provided by the local authority. The school is part of Wiltshire's improving schools' programme and will continue to receive regular monitoring visits until the next Ofsted inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

David Edwards

Her Majesty's Inspector