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18 April 2013

Miss J Keeble
Executive Headteacher
Yatton Church of England Junior School
High Street
Bristol
BS49 4HJ

Dear Miss Keeble

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Yatton Church of England Junior School, North Somerset

Following my visit to your school on 18 April 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 monitoring visit, I accompanied you and the deputy headteacher on a brief tour of the school and discussed the actions that you have taken since the inspection. I also held discussions with a small group of pupils, the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. I evaluated the school's action plan and scrutinised a range of associated documents such as the outcomes of monitoring activities undertaken by leaders and records of staff training.

Context

Since the recent inspection, the governing body has elected a new chairperson. One member of the senior leadership team has taken maternity leave. Her leadership responsibilities have been reallocated to another member of staff.

Main findings

The school's leaders are responding effectively to the main areas for improvement that were identified at the inspection. The amount of good teaching observed in lessons has increased and discussion with a small group of pupils confirmed that they are beginning to understand more clearly how they can improve their written work.

Senior leaders have implemented a comprehensive programme of actions to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers have observed colleagues in another primary school and have agreed short-term targets with leaders to improve their performance. The school's leaders now take account of a greater range of evidence when evaluating the quality of teaching in each class. Consequently, they have a more accurate view of the quality of teaching than was previously the case. Teachers have improved the way they plan lessons because senior leaders have set clear expectations of important information that teachers should consider. For example, the plans identify key questions to check pupils' understanding and provide opportunities to increase the level of challenge for all pupils.

Scrutiny of a sample of pupils' written work shows that teachers are using a greater range of comments and questions to guide pupils more clearly in their learning. Teachers' written feedback tells pupils where they have been successful, sets further tasks and identifies errors for correction. Pupils in Year 6 report that the work is more demanding and that they must give clear reasons for their opinions when evaluating how well they have understood the learning objective. A brief tour of the school showed that learning targets are displayed prominently so that pupils make greater use of them when they are working. When questioned, these pupils demonstrated a good understanding of their writing targets, but were less clear about what they needed to do to improve in mathematics.

Senior leaders have increased the amount of time they spend teaching and have employed an additional teacher so that pupils are taught mathematics in smaller groups based on their different abilities. Teachers focus more carefully on the mathematical skills and knowledge that pupils need to achieve a particular level.

The school's action plan sets clear priorities to tackle weaknesses systematically. Senior leaders and the governors review the plan frequently and their evaluations focus strongly on the difference that actions have made. Governors have a clear understanding of how the pupil premium is being spent and the evidence leaders have used to judge the quality of teaching. This is because the headteacher provides the governing body with important information in an easily readable format and because governors attend meetings with senior leaders and the local authority to check the school's progress. The governing body has commissioned an external review of their effectiveness which will take place shortly. Governors have plans in

place to check the school's work first hand, but how and when this will be done is not recorded clearly in the action plan. Similarly, the school has set ambitious targets to improve pupils' achievement in each year group, but these lack interim milestones and are not summarised in the action plan. Consequently, it is difficult for leaders to see at a glance the progress that has been 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, I recommend that further action is taken to refine the school's action plan by:

- summarising end-of year targets and setting interim milestones so that leaders may evaluate the impact of actions more easily
- recording how and when governors will check the school's progress towards addressing each key issue
- applying the outcomes of the external review of governance to ensure that planned actions tackle all aspects of Key Issue 3.

I also agreed to arrange for you and the Chair of the Governing Body to attend an Ofsted 'Getting to good' seminar. Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school's leaders have been supported effectively by personnel from the local authority. The impact of this support is evident in the leaders' more thorough evaluation of the quality of teaching. Staff training to improve the quality of written feedback and identify the features of good teaching has been received well. As a result, each teacher has identified one aspect of their teaching they intend to improve.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for North Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ian Hancock
Her Majesty's Inspector