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Nikki Stevens
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Hawkwell
Ashingdon Road
Rochford
SS4 1RF

Dear Mrs Stevens

Monitoring inspection visit under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Hawkwell, Essex local authority.

Following my visit to your school on 29 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 on 13 January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, I met with you, other senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors. I had a telephone discussion with a representative from the local authority. We toured the classrooms together and looked in some of the pupils' books. I reviewed documents including school improvement plans and records of monitoring.

Context

Since the inspection in January 2013 one member of the governing body has resigned and is yet to be replaced.

Main findings

The leader for assessment works with teachers to ensure that their assessments of pupils' work, particularly writing are accurate. This has been an issue for the school in the past. She checks their accuracy by regularly looking at the work in pupils' books. Leaders observe lessons to judge the quality of teaching. They track pupil progress data to identify pupils who may be falling behind. Leaders are not drawing all of this information together, however, to gain a profile of teaching overtime.

You and the deputy headteacher coach teachers as a way of improving practice. You also visit lessons to consider ways to improve progress for groups of pupils. Teachers and leaders negotiate the focus for this work but it does not always address the school's most important priorities for improvement. Training sessions have been held, for instance to improve teachers' planning for the needs of all pupils.

The school development plan has been adapted to ensure it addresses all of the areas for improvement. Milestone targets for each term have been set. There are not enough attainment and progress targets for each year group to help governors and others check how well things are improving however. Leaders have not planned enough to ensure that the older pupils leave the school with the necessary writing skills. There are gaps in their learning because of underachievement in previous years.

A review of governance is due to take place imminently. The governing body has re-structured in order to become more effective. A standards committee has been set up and its members have been trained to ensure they can ask searching questions when looking at school achievement data.

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, I recommend that further action is taken to:

- ensure school improvement plans include targets for the progress and attainment of each year group in reading, writing and mathematics
- consider allocating further resources to ensure that older pupils reach national averages in writing
- ensure that the coaching of teachers addresses the school's most pressing priorities for improvement

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

External support

The local authority has provided access to training for leaders in getting the school to good. Teachers are also receiving training to improve their teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Michelle Winter
Her Majesty's Inspector