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8 May 2013

Miss Christine Robson  
Headteacher  
Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary  
Westway  
Peterlee  
County Durham  
SR8 1DE

Dear Miss Robson

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Following my visit with Mark Evans HMI to your school on 7 May 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 March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, three members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a supporting headteacher from the local educational partnership. The school action plan was evaluated and I undertook a tour of the school, visiting classrooms briefly.

**Context**

There have been no significant changes to the context of the school since the section 5 inspection. The headteacher will retire at the end of the summer term 2013. A new headteacher has been appointed and the school intends to expand the senior leadership team by appointing a new deputy headteacher.

## **Main findings**

The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have a common vision, shared by all staff, to raise standards throughout the school. They have produced a detailed post-Ofsted action plan which includes all areas of improvement from the inspection report together with measurable and timed targets which are monitored and updated on a weekly basis by senior leaders and a newly created sub-committee of the governors.

Senior leaders are taking the correct steps to raise the expectations of all staff in relation to what pupils, and in particular boys, can achieve in English and mathematics. Leaders and teachers report that staff meetings are more purposeful with a stronger focus on pupil progress. Teachers have begun holding regular discussions with pupils and their parents to review the progress being made against what are now challenging targets.

Senior leaders are now routinely checking on the quality of teaching and learning. Records indicate that this work is identifying where teaching still requires improvement and where performance is getting better. This information is enabling senior staff and governors to be much more rigorous in assessing teachers' classroom performance and in helping to set challenging targets which are securely linked to pupils' progress. Teachers and teaching assistants are keen to improve their work and routinely share good practice both within the school and with staff from schools in the local education partnership.

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:

- ensure that the school's action plan continues to focus on the areas for improvement and is carefully monitored to judge the impact of this work on pupils' progress
- ensure that effective links with the Peterlee Education Partnership and with the local authority continue to support improvement in the school, especially as the new senior leadership team becomes established
- attend one of the Ofsted 'Getting to good' seminars.

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

## **External support**

The local authority knows the school well and has provided it with effective advice and support on improvement planning. A school improvement adviser has been appointed to monitor the progress of the school's work. Well-established links with a number of local schools in the Peterlee Education Partnership are providing teachers and teaching assistants with regular opportunities to meet and to observe good practice. The Senior Leadership Team receives support from the headteacher of Wingate Infant School, a local leader of education.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Durham and the Director of Education for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.

Yours sincerely

David Brown  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**