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10 May 2013

Mrs C Tucker
Headteacher
Rossington St Michael's CofE Primary School
Sheepbridge Lane
Old Rossington
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN11 0EZ

Dear Mrs Tucker

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Rossington St Michael's CofE Primary School, Doncaster

Following my visit to your school on 9 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 February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, four governors including the Chair of Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school action plan and other monitoring documents were evaluated. The headteacher and HMI toured the school to look at teaching and learning.

Context

Three members of staff will retire at the end of the summer term. Senior leaders' posts are being re-organised and appointments are yet to be made both to these roles and for other teaching and support posts. A member of the governing body has resigned.

Main Findings

The urgency with which the school must improve is fully appreciated by the headteacher. She has wasted no time implementing clear systems to check teachers' planning and whether the quality of teaching and the progress made by all pupils is improving rapidly. The headteacher and governors understand that changes are imperative and for some time pupils have not done as well as they should. Evidence presented during the inspection supports her view that some staff are responding well to the new requirements and plan work to meet the different needs of pupils in their class. The headteacher checks carefully to identify where progress is most evident and is rigorous in her approach when this is not the case.

The school action plan does not include all issues identified in the section 5 inspection, relating to more-able pupils' progress in mathematics and improving writing in particular. The plan needs to reflect a longer time frame and more frequent milestones.

The governors support and welcome the headteachers' approach. Governors receive helpful documents to enable them understand how well the school is doing. They are also becoming closely involved in first-hand monitoring so they can challenge leaders from a well-informed position.

Middle leaders have begun to consider how to improve their areas and are reporting their findings to senior leaders and governors. To date, these reports lack sharp evaluative comments and senior leaders plan to work with middle leaders so that they include measurable points in these documents.

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:

- strengthen the action plan by ensuring all issues from the section 5 report are included and the time scale for measuring actions is increased
- embed the systems introduced to improve teaching and learning and ensure that planned activities are suitable for all groups of pupils
- help middle leaders develop a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- agree with the local authority clear targets for improvement using accurate and informative data.

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

External support

The local authority officer continues to work well in partnership with leaders and governors. Targets set for the school need to be reviewed now that there is a better awareness of pupils' capabilities and the progress made by different year groups. The local authority officer has been instrumental in brokering links between St Michael's and other primary schools so that there is support for leadership and opportunities for staff to work with their counterparts in other schools to share practice and experience. This work is proving beneficial, but not yet having a clear impact in every classroom.

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

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector