

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0117 311 5359
Direct F 0117 315 0430
Email: christina.bannerman@tribalgroup.com

5 May 2013

Louise Croker
Headteacher
St George's Catholic Primary School
Woodcock Road
Warminster
BA12 9EZ

Dear Mrs Croker

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to St George's Catholic School, Wiltshire

Following my visit to your school on 3 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 you, other senior leaders, members of the governing body and a group of pupils. A telephone discussion was held with the school's local authority adviser. The school's action plans, recent information on pupil progress and the quality of teaching were evaluated.

Context

One teacher left the school at the end of the spring term and has been replaced. The assistant headteacher has resigned and will leave at the end of this term. The recruitment procedure to recruit a new deputy headteacher is underway.

Main findings

The school leaders, including governors, are clear that the recent inspection judgement prompted them to take immediate actions so the school becomes good as quickly as possible. The quality of teaching is already better. More pupils than at the time of the inspection are making good progress toward challenging targets in English and mathematics. The pupils spoken to said that they are enjoying being challenged more in mathematics.

School leaders are well aware of the current quality of teaching through very regular planned observations and frequent 'drop-ins' to classes. A number of factors, including changes in personnel have contributed to the recent improvements. Newly introduced weekly monitoring of teachers' planning with quick feedback has been significant in bringing about improvements in learning. Where there are still concerns that teaching is not consistently good, there is close monitoring and support. Additional help is provided so that pupils' learning is not compromised.

Middle leaders are much more confident in the analysis and use of data that they were at the time of the inspection. There is now a greater sharing of the responsibilities for monitoring. They are clearer about current progress and the impact their work. There is evidence that recent interventions in mathematics, for example, have improved the progress of pupils who previously had difficulties.

Additional training and an external review of governance have been commissioned to support governors to increase their knowledge and skills so that they can challenge and support the school more effectively. They have already taken the decision to appoint a deputy headteacher to increase the school's capacity for improvement.

The school has developed plans to address key issues and made changes to existing plans. Currently these plans are too focused on activities to be done and the processes to bring these about. There is a lack of agreed, measurable success criteria. This means that it is difficult to measure progress or hold people to account. The responsibility for monitoring and evaluation is not clear in the plans. It relies too much on the headteacher.

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:

- sharpen improvement plans so that there are precise success criteria that are measurable. Include milestones that can be monitored. Specify who is accountable and the arrangements for monitoring and evaluation.

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

External support

The local authority has allocated additional money to the school to pay for school improvement activities which the school has commissioned and are contributing to improvements. On-going contact has been maintained with School Improvement Partner since the inspection. It is understood that there will be additional adviser support provided for the school from September 2013. St George's has been invited to join the Wiltshire Improving Schools Programme but the school believes it would be more beneficial to devise its own bespoke programme of improvement. It is recommended that the way forward and any additional support is agreed urgently by the school and the local authority so that no time is lost.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen McShane
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter will be copied to the following:

- Chair of the Governing Body
- Director of Children's Service for Wiltshire
- Diocese of Clifton