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21 June 2013

Mrs Jones
Headteacher
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Devizes
St Joseph's Place
Devizes
SN10 1DD

Dear Mrs Jones,

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Joseph's Catholic Primary Academy School, Devizes

Following my visit to your school on 20 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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, I met with you, other senior leaders, pupils and members of the Governing Body. I was unable, on this visit, to speak with the academy's school improvement partner to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated to see how this is having an impact on improving teaching and outcomes for pupils overall. I also looked at a sample of governing body minutes.

Context

Staffing remains stable except for one teacher who is on maternity leave.

Main findings

You have wasted no time in tackling the areas identified for improvement at the most recent inspection and have amended your school improvement plan accordingly. Where weak teaching was identified you have successfully addressed this and put in place plans for further support and training for staff. You have allocated time and resources wisely. The revised school improvement plan clearly identifies who is responsible for implementing and monitoring each action, and by when. However, this cycle of information has not been shared with all members of staff.

In regards to improving communications with the parent body, senior leaders, including governors, are becoming more transparent in the way the school manages and deals with pupils' behaviour. To this end a focus group made up of staff, governors and parents has been created to manage this initiative. Furthermore, through curriculum workshops and information evenings the school is demonstrating its commitment to working with parents, carers and pupils in order to improve communications with parents.

English and mathematics subject leaders carefully track pupils' progress. They share the information with teachers who use it to help plan the next steps in pupils' learning. Similarly, members of the governing body were able to explain how they receive regular updates on pupils' progress and the work of the school. This is enabling them to ask more challenging questions of senior leaders. As a result governors are gaining confidence in holding the school more effectively to account. To strengthen this process even further the governing body has decided to request an external review of governance.

In conclusion, senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- share the school improvement plan with all staff and governors so that all staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in improving the school
- make sure that progress in implementing school improvement plans are considered at all governing body meetings.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

As a relatively new academy you are wisely drawing upon the skills and expertise of external partners such as the Clifton Diocese in order to support and strengthen all-round school improvements.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Academies Advisers Unit at the Department for Education, the local authority for Wiltshire and the Roman Catholic Clifton Diocese.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards
Her Majesty's Inspector