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19 July 2013

Mrs D Monaghan
Headteacher
St Edward's RC Primary School
Lisson Grove
London
NW1 6LH

Dear Mrs Monaghan

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of St Edward's RC Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 19 July 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in May 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the acting headteacher, the consultant executive headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the Diocese of Westminster and two representatives from the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plans were evaluated. The acting headteacher accompanied the inspector on a tour of the school.

Context

Since the inspection, one member of staff has left the school and five other teachers will be leaving this summer. The school is fully staffed for September. The school is considering becoming a sponsored academy.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The acting headteacher is working closely with the consultant executive headteacher to embed the improvements which had begun before the inspection and to address the key recommendations from the report. They have an appropriate post-Ofsted action plan.

There has been a continued focus on improving the quality of teaching and since the inspection, a coach, who had been helping strengthen the quality of teaching, has increased his work with the school. Training on what makes outstanding teaching has been given to all teachers and expectations of what is expected of all staff have been made clearer. All teachers now have performance management targets which make them more responsible for pupils' progress. The process for recruiting new teachers has been reviewed and made more rigorous to ensure that those appointed have good teaching skills.

An external consultant from the local authority is working to raise standards in literacy across the school. Since the inspection, the curriculum has been reviewed to ensure that it helps to develop pupils' writing skills more effectively. Results in the national tests, which pupils take in Year 6, have improved in writing. However, the percentage of more-able pupils who attain the higher levels is still below the national percentage for 2012. Nevertheless, all pupils in Year 6 have made at least the progress which is expected nationally.

The school is working hard to continue its increased involvement with parents and carers. It has reported more fully to parents and carers on pupils' progress and has held meetings with parents and carers as pupils move from one stage in the school to another. Across the year, there have been a number of parental workshops and plans for the coming year show an increased number of workshops are intended.

The governing body demonstrates an understanding of the current situation of the school. The Chair of the Governing Body is highly experienced and, since the inspection, has revised the existing governors' action plan to focus more tightly on the key areas for improvement. She has established a small group of governors who receive regular reports on the quality of teaching and hold the school to account for improvement. The governing body is aware of the need to improve communication with parents and carers, and plans to involve parents and carers more in the work of the governing body are in hand. The governing body is currently conducting an audit to identify where there are gaps in their skills.

The local authority is providing good support for the school. Effective relationships exist between the local authority, the school and the diocese, and they are working closely together to ensure that the school's future is secure. Prior to the inspection, the local authority was already working to improve the quality of teaching and

leadership, and was regularly reviewing progress. Since the inspection, advisers from the local authority have continued to work in the school to develop literacy and support the work in special educational needs. The local authority is monitoring the work of the school closely. It has provided training for governors. It is keeping the composition of the governing body under tight review to ensure it possesses the necessary skills to move the school forward.

The focus on improvement, which was noted in the inspection, is continuing. However, the school now faces considerable challenges to maintain the momentum in the new academic year. There is a high staff turnover. There will be a new interim headteacher and new deputy headteacher, who both join the school in September. They have much to do to ensure the school makes rapid progress in all the areas identified in the report.

Following the monitoring inspection these judgements were made:

The school's action plans are fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Westminster and the Interim Director of Education for the Diocese of Westminster. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marcia Headon
Additional Inspector