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Rhona Griffin
Headteacher
Warberry Church of England Primary School
Cedars Road
Torquay
TQ1 1SB

Dear Mrs Griffin

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Warberry Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 19 September 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 June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not yet taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. The school should take immediate action to:

- senior leaders should take urgent and effective action to improve the systems for checking the work of staff and providing them with specific areas for development. This should then be followed up with a clear and timely structure of support, guidance and challenge
- make sure that the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning draws on pupil progress data, observations and work scrutiny to ensure a closer focus on the progress made by different groups of pupils
- ensure that the school improvement plan includes the details of specific monitoring actions and the actions to improve the progress of different groups of pupils, particularly those supported by pupil premium funding.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, five members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. A range of documentation was reviewed, including the latest information about pupils' progress and feedback to teachers following lesson observations. During the day you joined me on brief visits to all classes and, with senior leaders, we conducted a scrutiny of pupils' work.

Context

The governing body has made four new appointments of teaching staff who joined the school in September 2013. The roles and responsibilities of senior leaders have been reviewed and a senior leader has taken over responsibility for leading improvements in Years 3 and 4.

Main findings

There are a number of reasons why you and other senior leaders are not yet making enough of a difference to raising the quality of learning across the school. As at the time of the previous inspection the procedures for checking the work of teachers are not rigorous enough to ensure consistently good or better teaching. Although the term is new, senior leaders have been slow to draw up and complete a cycle of monitoring across the school. To date, senior leaders have completed only limited monitoring of pupils' work books or direct observations of lessons to check carefully the effectiveness of the school's improvement plan.

During the learning walk and scrutiny of work completed on the day of the visit, you and other senior leaders demonstrated your capacity to accurately identify areas for improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. We observed a number of occasions where groups of pupils were not being challenged sufficiently to do their best because the task set was too vague or because staff had not moved pupils on in their learning quickly enough. In contrast we observed high quality teaching and learning in a Year 6 class and this practice is not being shared and observed by other teachers across the school to provide them with helpful guidance and improve their own practice. You recognise that your skills and abilities and those of other senior leaders are not being utilised and harnessed to improve the quality of teaching and learning because there are no clear systems in place to ensure that weaknesses are quickly identified and that urgent and effective actions will follow. A senior leader has led staff training on the use of a revised system to track the progress of different groups of pupils. You and other senior leaders have recently begun to identify those pupils that are not making sufficient progress. You have instigated pupil progress meetings with class teachers to agree the interventions and

support that they will provide to accelerate achievement. You recently held a meeting to provide governors with more detailed information about pupils' progress. The data now provides clearer information and raises expectations by providing helpful comparisons with pupils' progress from their starting points and over the year. However, the data also highlights that the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than their peers, especially in writing.

The school improvement plan describes appropriate actions that will be taken to raise pupils' achievement. It records key milestones over the course of the academic year. However, the plan does not precisely detail when individual monitoring and evaluation events will take place or the impact on pupils' achievement that will result from specific actions. It does not yet provide details of the actions that will be taken to better meet the needs of pupils who need extra help, particularly those pupils supported through pupil premium funding. This makes it difficult for governors to verify the impact you and other senior leaders are having on the progress of different groups of pupils.

The members of the governing body have begun to compile a separate action plan aimed at improving their level of challenge and support for the school. The plan represents an accurate self-evaluation, recognising the need for more formal planning of monitoring and evaluation events, further training on pupil tracking data and that the performance management process should focus on the school's key priority areas. The chair of the governing body has acted appropriately to organise a full external review of governance to be held in October.

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

The local authority is providing a suitable level of support. Senior leaders are benefiting from visits to and support from a local school. This work is contributing to improvements in the school improvement planning and the systems for checking pupils' progress. At the request of the governing body, the local authority will be carrying out a review of governance in September 2013. The local authority plans to ensure that a full review of the quality of teaching and learning is completed jointly by senior leaders and leaders from a partner school by the end of October 2013.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Torbay and the Diocese of Exeter.

Yours sincerely

Mark Lindfield

Her Majesty's Inspector