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Mrs Jayne Downey
Headteacher
St George's Roman Catholic Primary School
Overdale
Eastfield
Scarborough
North Yorkshire
YO11 3RE

Dear Mrs Downey

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St George's Roman Catholic Primary School, North Yorkshire

Following my visit to your school on 23 September 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 June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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:

- ensure that the actions contained within the school improvement plan to raise the quality of teaching clearly reflect the impact they are designed to have on pupils' learning and progress
- take steps to impress on all leaders, staff and governors that the momentum of improvement evident during the past year must be maintained and built on if the aim of being a good school is to be realised.

Evidence

During the visit I held meetings with the headteacher, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I also had a telephone conversation with the Diocesan Director of Education. I reviewed the school development plan and the local authority support plan.

Context

Since the recent section 5 inspection there have been a number of significant changes to the school's organisation. A new headteacher took up her appointment at the beginning of September 2013. A teacher in charge of the Early Years Foundation Stage also started at the same time. A new Chair of the Governing Body was elected in time for the new academic year.

Main findings

Given that the headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body have only been in post three weeks they have lost no time in addressing the improvements identified at the time of the previous inspection. Plans are in place to improve pupils' writing skills and develop the role of subject leaders. There are increased opportunities for pupils' to apply their writing skills in all subjects and a much greater emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' presentation skills. Subject leaders for English and mathematics are about to embark on a programme of frequent and regular monitoring of teaching and learning. The behaviour policy has been reviewed. This is continuing to have a beneficial effect on pupils' attitudes to learning and progress. A system to assess and record pupils' progress in religious education has also been successfully introduced. While the school improvement plan makes reference to initiatives designed to improve the quality of teaching throughout the school it is not sufficiently clear how they will impact on pupils' learning in every year group and this needs to be reviewed as a matter of urgency.

A school improvement committee has been established by the governing body. Members meet with the headteacher on a weekly basis and this enables them to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. As a result they are better placed to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The headteacher is fully aware that the good work undertaken during the past twelve months which resulted in the school no longer requiring special measures needs to be maintained and built on if it is to improve further. This view is supported by the governing body and must be understood by all staff.

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

Specialist advice and support provided by the local authority is helping the headteacher and governors to tackle the key priorities. A course that explains in detail what is required to become a good school is to be delivered by the local authority to all staff and governors. This will serve as a timely reminder to senior leaders, staff and governors that there can be no room for complacency if improvements to provision and pupils' performance are to be realised.

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

Yours sincerely

Christopher Keeler
Her Majesty's Inspector