

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancs Investment Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 0300 123 1231

Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566855

Direct F 01695 729320

Direct email: gail.hill@cfbt.com



24 September 2013

Mrs J Rush
Headteacher
St Ignatius Catholic Primary School
Storrs Hill Road
Ossett
West Yorkshire
WF5 0DQ

Dear Mrs Rush

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Ignatius Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 24 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, the Academy Council and the trust are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The academy should take further action to:

- rapidly develop leadership capacity beyond the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher
- ensure expertise within other trust schools and beyond is used effectively to accelerate the pace of improvement
- provide teachers with bespoke support to ensure all teaching is at least consistently good.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the acting deputy headteacher, the academy's improvement adviser and a representative of the Bishop Konstant Academy Trust. I toured the school with two pupils from Year 6 and met with a

group of teaching and non-teaching staff. I evaluated the academy's action plan and scrutinised other documents including unvalidated data from national tests and assessments in 2013.

Context

Since the academy's section 5 inspection, the deputy headteacher has retired and an interim deputy headteacher has been appointed, initially for one term. One class teacher has left the school and one newly qualified teacher has been appointed. An existing teacher has taken on the role of special educational needs coordinator and another has taken on the role of literacy coordinator. At the time of this monitoring inspection one teacher was absent long term due to ill health.

Main findings

The Academy Council, the trust and you were fully accepting of the findings of the inspection. Staff who met with me are committed to supporting the academy's improvement and appreciate how your leadership is helping them to be more effective. The improvement plan identifies the academy's position at the time of the inspection honestly and sets out clear actions, with measurable milestones, to ensure it is on track to become good. Unvalidated outcomes for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2013 are improved in a number of key areas. However, you rightly recognise that improving writing is a priority. You and your staff have worked hard to ensure that the accuracy of the assessment of pupils' work has improved since the inspection. This is allowing teachers and leaders to identify more effectively pupils who are not making enough progress. The academy's use of intervention is more sharply focused and more extensive so a greater number of pupils are being helped to make-up lost ground. However, it is too soon to measure the impact of this extra support as it has only been put in place very recently. Additional guidance for staff on what is expected in their planning has been welcomed and this is helping to ensure work is better matched to the needs of individuals in each class. Teachers' sharing of planning is helping to ensure that pupils in the same year group, but in different classes, have equitable learning experiences. The application of the academy's new marking policy is increasing the quality and consistency of feedback to pupils. Furthermore, the expectation that pupils will take immediate steps to improve their work or consolidate their understanding is having a positive impact on their learning.

The drive for improvement remains heavily reliant on your leadership. This is because some leaders are new and others with leadership roles require considerable support and training to enable them to develop the skills and expertise needed to make a significant contribution to the academy's improvement. Your monitoring and that carried out by the acting deputy headteacher are successfully pinpointing where inconsistencies or less effective practice need to be quickly addressed. Professional

development is beginning to be more carefully tailored towards the tackling specific weaknesses in teachers' practice.

Members of the Academy Council have continued to focus strongly on developing their skills and understanding of effective governance. For example, their recent training on school performance data and recognition that they must satisfy themselves that data are accurate is resulting in more challenge for the academy's leaders.

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 academy purchases support from the local authority and has found this very valuable in helping to draw-up the post-Ofsted improvement plan and in providing additional expertise and challenge. The academy's improvement adviser has also successfully brokered a useful partnership with a senior leader in another school to support the professional development and impact of the acting deputy headteacher. The trust is robust in its monitoring of the school's performance and there is potential for the Catholic schools within the partnership to provide additional support. However, this academy-to-academy support is at an early stage of development and, as yet, is not helping to accelerate improvement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Academy Council, the Bishop Konstant Academy Trust, the Director of Children's Services for Wakefield and as below.

Yours sincerely

Katrina Gueli
Her Majesty's Inspector