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Mrs Alison Tweedle
Headteacher
Gillamoor Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Main Street
Gillamoor
York
North Yorkshire
YO62 7HX

Dear Mrs Tweedle

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Gillamoor Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, North Yorkshire

Following my visit to your school on 11 October 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 July 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 all monitoring activities are carefully tailored to have the maximum impact on improving pupils' achievement over time.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, one teacher, two teaching assistants, three governors including the Chair and the vice-chair, and a representative from the local authority. A number of documents including records of monitoring activities and the school's improvement plans were also evaluated.

Context

Since the previous inspection, one new teacher and teaching assistant have joined the school. One new governor has also joined the governing body.

Main findings

In this small school, the headteacher, school staff and governors are working effectively together to secure improvements. Actions taken by the headteacher, in the short space of time since the previous inspection, have focused effectively on the priorities for improvement. The school's improvement plan also includes a number of other key aspects, for example on the curriculum, to ensure that actions taken are complementary and wholly support raising pupils' achievement, while promoting their personal well-being.

Regular monitoring over time is evident, including lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and meetings to check on pupils' progress. More recently, formal and informal lesson observations have taken place, including joint observations by class teachers. These have already started to support the school's work in improving aspects of classroom practice, including the quality of questioning, the profile of 'speaking and listening' and the use of key vocabulary, particularly in mathematics lessons. Teaching assistants are fully involved in the school's improvement work. They play a key role in both supporting individual pupils and, in some areas, leading aspects of the curriculum.

The headteacher has revised the school's data tracking information and challenging targets are evident across the key stages. Regular pupil progress meetings with all staff and individual teachers are in place to ensure that each pupil's achievement is frequently monitored and discussed. The school is aware that there is now scope to adapt further the school's monitoring activities to ensure that teaching activities are having a secure impact on pupils' achievement over time.

The governing body continues to challenge and support fully the school's work, notably through the link roles with curriculum areas. Plans are in place for further training on achievement information, provided by the local authority, and further partnership work with the support school.

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 has supported the school effectively. Key actions that have taken place since the previous inspection include joint lesson observations with the school's education development adviser and a full audit of mathematics provision, with governor involvement. The partnership work, brokered by the local authority, with a National Support School has continued, with a focus on developing provision and leadership further. The school also continues to work closely with two local primary schools in federation on a number of joint activities.

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

Yours sincerely

Angela Headon
Her Majesty's Inspector