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Mrs Susan Harrison
Headteacher
English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, Worthing
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Goring-by-Sea
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Dear Mrs Harrison

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, Worthing

Following my visit to your school on 11 November 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 September 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:

- improve the monitoring of teaching by leaders making more use of unannounced visits to classrooms to check the quality of teaching and plan future developments.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, a middle level leader and three members of the governing body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I evaluated the school development plan and reviewed school records on teaching and an audit of marking. I visited each class to see the school in action and talked to some pupils about how marking helps them to improve their work.

Context

Since the inspection in September 2013 the Year 2 teacher has left the school. One of the assistant headteachers, together with a teacher who has returned from maternity leave, is teaching in Year 2. The coordinator for pupils with special educational needs (SENCo) and mathematics is leaving at Easter 2014.

Main findings

You identified many of the areas for improvement highlighted by the September inspection prior to the inspection taking place, and wrote a plan to address them. Since the inspection you have acted decisively to put the plan into action, with the full support of the staff and governors.

You have rightly decided to review pupil progress data more frequently. This is helping teachers to set work at the right level. The SENCo/mathematics subject leader knows pupils very well so those that are disabled or have special educational needs and those falling behind in mathematics are given the correct support, including in small groups, to make good progress. You will need to maintain this when you appoint a new SENCo and coordinator for mathematics.

Evidence from lesson observations, books and data is used more effectively to help teachers to improve their lessons. We discussed how you can use your day to day visits to classrooms, including unannounced ones, to provide additional information, check improvements are maintained and plan future support.

You have made a positive start in improving marking. Teachers are developing Moving Learning On (MLO) time so pupils can improve their work. This is at an early stage and teachers are trying out a variety of methods before a final decision is made about a whole school approach. Nonetheless teachers are starting to set new challenges which move pupils' learning forward more quickly.

The English subject leader is clear about how to raise standards in writing, although work is at an early stage. There is some good practice in teaching in the school to provide a model of what is possible, and you are using some teachers effectively to

coach others to improve. You need to build on this to ensure expectations are consistently high across the school.

You have sensibly allocated teachers to project teams to work on identified areas within the action plan. This is providing a useful opportunity for middle level leaders to develop their leadership skills, although it is too early to see the impact of their actions.

Governors see themselves as part of the team to drive school improvement. They are usefully assigned to monitoring roles so they can see for themselves how well the school is making progress. For example one governor carried out a check of marking alongside the headteacher. This type of work is providing governors with helpful information to challenge the school's leaders. The chair of governors is rightly checking that new governors have skills to complement the existing members of the governing body. The planned review of governance will be used to develop good practice further.

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 provided 'light touch' support for the school because it feels school leaders have good capacity for improvement. The local authority is carrying out the planned review of governance. I am pleased you are working with other local schools to support areas such as checking your assessment of pupils' work is accurate and the development of the new curriculum for religious education. Such work is invaluable to enable teachers to benefit from good practice outside of the school and I urge you to continue with it.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for West Sussex and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Gard
Her Majesty's Inspector