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Debbie Middleton  
Headteacher  
Leigh Church of England Primary School  
Plants Hill Crescent  
Tile Hill  
CV4 9RQ

Dear Mrs Middleton

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Leigh Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 2 December 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 second 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:

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring:
  - the pace of learning is quicker and more is expected of what pupils can achieve during each lesson;
  - work is matched accurately and appropriately to all pupils' needs;
  - more able pupils are provided with more challenging work;
  - the gaps in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are closed further;
  - school leaders make high quality teaching appointments when the opportunity arises.
  
- Develop the role of middle leaders so that they contribute more fully to the leadership and management of the school.
  
- Develop further the role of the Governing Body so that governors:

- embed the systems and structures that have been recently developed;
- encourage those members who are less active to take their roles and responsibilities seriously;
- increase their understanding of data so that they hold the school's leaders to account for standards and quality;
- implement regular progress and support meetings with the headteacher.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and your deputy headteacher, the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and the National Leader of Education (NLE) who is working with you to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also met with the Head of School Effectiveness from the Coventry Diocese. Progress towards the areas identified on the school improvement plan was evaluated. I observed four parts of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) sessions with you. I also observed seven parts of lessons, four with you and three with your deputy headteacher.

## **Context**

Since my last visit in September 2013, two teachers have been absent for extended periods. The part-time teacher is now working full time in Year 3. A supply teacher has been appointed in Year 4 until the end of the academic year to ensure continuity of provision for the pupils in that class. A higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) and a teaching assistant have been appointed to support and meet the needs of identified pupils. A breakfast club operates each morning. One new governor has been appointed. There is one governor vacancy. Active steps have been taken to strengthen the Governing Body.

## **Main findings**

There are signs that you and the other leaders are beginning to secure the necessary improvements in teaching and learning. You are tackling inadequate teaching by following appropriate procedures and guidance; receiving good support from the NLE. As a result of this work there have been staff absences which you have managed suitably. Despite this, pupils in classes affected by staff absence have made less progress than other groups. You have created more time to work strategically with your deputy headteacher and have made two key appointments of a business manager and higher level teaching assistant to support you in managing aspects of the school that have been extremely demanding of your time.

The school's unvalidated RAISE online data shows that pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 was significantly below average in writing and mathematics. Too many pupils made inadequate progress from their starting points. Achievement

was below the government's floor standards which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2013 was slightly higher in all subjects compared with the previous year. Although there is a gradually improving trend in all subjects since 2010, attainment remains significantly below the national average in writing and mathematics. It is broadly in line in reading. The school's data shows pupils are making expected progress in most classes. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have made slower progress since the start of the academic year. Pupils are making less progress in mathematics than reading and writing. You have responded to this by securing the support of the local authority's consultant for mathematics to work with those teachers and classes requiring training and guidance.

The school's approach to phonics is improving pupils' reading confidence. In all four phonics lessons visited, I observed good teaching. Pupils built well on previous learning and the level of challenge provided matched their reading ability. Most pupils concentrated hard and participated well. The majority of teaching observed in other lessons required improvement. In a few lessons, teachers planned activities that matched the needs of the pupils and learning objectives were shared with pupils so they knew what they were going to learn. Some interesting and challenging tasks were presented for pupils such as a science lesson on micro-organisms. However, in most lessons, the pace of learning was not always brisk enough because teachers failed to pitch the work they gave pupils at a level that ensured they made good progress. Pupils' spent too much time completing similar tasks which caused them to lose interest and concentration. Higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged. In mathematics lessons it was evident that pupils had gaps in their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Pupils were not confident to solve problems mentally. Some pupils did not take enough care and pride with their presentation. Marking is variable. Marking is most effective where pupils' books contain clear targets for improvement so that they know how well they have done and what they need to do next. A good range of assessment for learning strategies is employed such as peer and self-assessment and talking partners.

The Governing Body has a much better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have addressed many aspects identified on their action plan for improvement but many areas are at the early stages of implementation and need to be consolidated. Governors have been involved in the construction of the school development plan and have revised several policies. They have undertaken a range of training and are increasing their knowledge and understanding of the school's data. However, further training is required to increase their understanding and confidence in data analysis. They have participated in pupil progress meetings and have a better understanding of how pupil premium funds are spent. They have been involved in the performance management of the headteacher and intend to hold regular progress and support meetings with you in the New Year. A small number of governors are not as active as you would like, or need to be, in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities.

## PROTECT-INSPECTION



Currently you and your deputy have responsibility for much of the school's development and monitoring. You recognise that you need to build up the confidence of your middle managers by providing training and opportunities for them to fulfil their roles more effectively so that you can delegate responsibilities to them.

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**

Good support has been provided by local authority officers. Your school is part of the School Improvement Board process and regular checks and reviews are undertaken to ensure you keep on track to achieve your targets. You have also received good support from an educational consultant and leaders and staff of Network 10, which is the local network of schools to which your school belongs. The NLE has provided good leadership support and you have visited her school and a programme of further support is programmed for members of the Governing Body.

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

Yours sincerely

Paul Weston  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**