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Wendy Kelway
Headteacher
Capel St Mary Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
The Street
Capel St Mary
Ipswich
IP9 2EG

Dear Ms Kelway

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Capel St Mary Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 4 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 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 action to:

- use relevant information from the 'Getting to Good' training materials discussed during the visit to further involve senior leaders in tightening up the action plan.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you, two teachers, four members of the governing body, and representatives of the local authority and the diocese, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I looked at work in pupils' books and considered a range of documents including the school action plan and records of pupil progress meetings. We undertook short visits to all classes to see the pupils at work.

Context

Since the inspection, a new Chair of Governors has taken up post and a new parent governor has been elected.

Main findings

You are continuing to drive improvement at Capel St Mary with passion and commitment to secure the best quality of provision for all pupils at the school. Staff say pupils' learning is at the core of all you do. You have recognised the strengths and expertise of staff and this is improving your team's morale. Through involving staff in planning for improvement, you have made sure that everyone understands the part they have to play in getting the school to good.

Staff, governors and children are clear that you are making a difference. Staff are encouraged to talk about their work and contribute ideas to improve learning. They say their involvement in identifying strengths and weaknesses is helping their own practice become sharper. Pupils are equally positive about your impact. One child said, 'She comes in our classes to see what we are doing a lot and it keeps me on track.'

Your planning clearly addresses all of the areas for development identified during the inspection. However, you agreed that dates and timescales by which these are expected and will be checked could be made clearer. There are good examples of the improvements happening because of early actions you have taken to move the school to good. For example, the first assessment data are showing that most pupils are making more progress and staff are using this data more effectively to shape learning for pupils in their classes.

You have analysed pupils' achievements and made sure that raised expectations for progress are included in teachers' performance management. You have checked the accuracy of assessment and are working with the local high school to find out how well pupils in Year 6 in 2013 were prepared to move on.

You are working closely with other local schools to develop your curriculum. Pupils are using mathematics more meaningfully in different subjects and this is making it more enjoyable. Teachers' marking of pupils' work in mathematics is starting to include more moving on comments so that pupils know what to do next. Increased challenge is evident in both marking and in the pupils' responses. During our visits to lessons we saw some good examples of pupils responding to marking and using what they have learnt from that in their next lesson.

You have worked with senior leaders to make sure you all have the same expectations and understanding of the elements of good and outstanding teaching. You have ensured that mathematics and English leaders have time to monitor their subjects and analyse the progress pupils are making. Regular meetings where you

review the quality of teaching, pupils' work and the progress they are making are enabling you and teachers to improve pupils' learning experiences rapidly.

Governors have a clear understanding of improvement priorities. They have restructured committees to ensure their continued monitoring is more aligned with the action plan. The information you share about pupil achievement is keeping them well informed because it is providing them with more detail, than in the past, of the progress and attainment of different groups of children. Through attendance at meetings with staff, they understand the processes you are using to improve progress.

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 a good understanding of the school and you are engaging positively with the Challenge Partner, an experienced headteacher, they fund to facilitate improvement. Records of visits and actions you are taking demonstrate that you are making the most of the professional dialogue and review offered. Through the good relationships established, the diocese provides extra mentoring as necessary.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Suffolk and the Director of Education for the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

Yours sincerely

Prue Rayner
Her Majesty's Inspector