

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

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566932
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email: hcarnall@cfbt.com



12 February 2014

Mr Joe Bourke
Headteacher
St Joseph's RC Primary School
St Joseph's Drive
Ordsall
Salford
Greater Manchester
M5 3JP

Dear Mr Bourke

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Joseph's RC Primary School, Salford

Following my visit to your school on 11 February 2014, 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 December 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 the post-inspection plan is shared, understood and owned by staff so that they can confidently move forward to enable all teaching to be good and all pupils to make at least good progress.
- extend work with external partners so as to embed an improvement and aspirational culture which challenges all pupils including the more able. In doing so link into good practice networks and events both within Salford and the wider region.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the deputy director of education for the Diocese of Salford. The school improvement plan was evaluated. Documents summarising other actions taken since the section 5 inspection were also scrutinised. A learning walk of the school was undertaken with the acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection the previous long serving headteacher has retired. An experienced ex-headteacher was appointed as acting headteacher and a deputy from another school was seconded as acting deputy headteacher. The appointment of a permanent headteacher is expected for the start of the summer term 2014.

Main findings

The first priority for the acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher has been to establish the confidence of staff and the wider school community following the unexpected departure of a long serving headteacher. They have worked with alacrity to fashion a post inspection improvement plan that reflects the key issues for improvement and charts a direction towards that improvement. They acknowledge that this plan now has to be embedded within the school culture so that staff both own it and have confidence in the ways and means towards improvement. The plan will also need to be reviewed by the permanent headteacher when appointed. Some progress has already been made. Tracking and monitoring systems have been sharpened to better identify individual pupil's progress and where and when interventions to aid improvement are required. Marking is regularly checked by senior leaders to identify current practice and areas for improvement. In particular marking and pupil progress made in mathematics has been scrutinised and areas for improvement prioritised. Pupils are now routinely given time to respond to the teacher's marking comments through the introduction of 'fix it' time. The school presents an orderly community where pupils are keen and eager to learn and enjoy learning activities. I have asked the current leaders to promote speedily links with best practice schools and other external partners that will help the school staff to better understand current outstanding and good practice and accelerate improvement in teaching and learning and attainment.

Governors are strengthening their understanding of attainment and progress data. A re-organisation of governance including committee structures has commenced. A review of governance is to be carried out in the current term.

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

I have recommended to the school that they seek to establish links with good practice primary schools to accelerate improvement and support the achievement of targets and objectives set in the improvement plan. The local authority offer good, well-focused and effective support. The diocese of Salford through its Office for Education offers strong support to the school and governors.

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

Yours sincerely

Patrick Geraghty
Her Majesty's Inspector