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Mrs Claire Dunstan
Headteacher
All Saints CofE VA Primary School
Boughton Green Road
Kingsthorpe
Northampton
NN2 7AJ

Dear Mrs Dunstan

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to All Saints CofE VA Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 29 January 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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 November 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.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. During the visit, you joined me on a tour of the school where I spoke informally with pupils and asked them about their work. I scrutinised a selection of pupils' books with you and the deputy headteacher. I also scrutinised additional school information. I reviewed the single central record.

Context

Since the last inspection one teacher has retired. There is an acting Early Years Foundation Stage leader to cover the long-term sickness of the substantive leader. One governor has resigned and another left at the end of her term of office.

Main findings

It is clear that you and the deputy headteacher are determined to bring about school improvement rapidly. Your plans to tackle the issues raised at your last inspection are clear and measurable. Timescales for improvement are sharp and demonstrate that you expect teachers to act quickly to improve outcomes for pupils. The governors' role in holding you to account for improved outcomes is clearly visible in your plans.

You have quickly identified the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching in different classes. You plan professional development that is matched precisely to meet teachers' needs. You expect them to develop quickly and improve their work. Systems for checking the quality of teaching are robust. Consequently, there is a growing understanding amongst staff that you are holding them to account for the progress made by pupils and teaching is improving quickly. However, there is still some inadequate teaching that has not been eradicated and this is having a detrimental impact on the progress of some pupils.

Teachers now plan lessons much more precisely to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Closing gaps in learning is a high priority, although progress in some classes is still slower than others. You are resolute in your commitment to resolve this. There are some good examples of high quality marking where pupils respond to the challenges their teachers set them. However, this is inconsistent and not all pupils receive the same level of challenge.

Your middle leaders have become better skilled in identifying areas for development in their subjects. They know what the strengths and weaknesses are. Consequently, they are challenging colleagues to improve their teaching and the progress pupils make is improving. You are providing middle leaders with training and opportunities to visit good practice in other schools. They are now bringing this good practice back into school and improving the quality of teaching in their subjects. As a result, leadership within your school is better distributed. Key messages about improvements in pupil outcomes are beginning to be embedded across the school through the wider leadership.

The governing body has responded well to the challenge of improving the school. It is clear governors are growing more confident to challenge senior leaders. They expect you to provide them with detailed reports about the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and they are holding you to account for your actions. Governors are linked closely with developments in school through regular meetings with subject leaders as well as senior leaders and this is having a positive outcome

because governors know the school much better. An external review of governance has taken place. Governors have already acted upon the recommendations to improve their effectiveness. However, governors do not have fully developed systems to check the impact of senior leaders' actions to improve the school independently.

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 acted promptly to provide effective support for the school. It quickly identified a National Leader of Governance to carry out the governing body review. It has also supported the school to develop closer links with local schools so that leaders benefit from expertise in good schools. It has also funded training for professional development.

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

Yours sincerely

Jan Connor
Her Majesty's Inspector