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7 March 2014

Mr Nathanael Robinson
Headteacher
Farcet CofE (C) Primary School
St Mary's Street
Farcet
Peterborough
PE7 3AR

Dear Mr Robinson

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Farcet CofE (C) Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 6 March 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 October 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 all teachers provide work that challenges pupils of all abilities.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you and the deputy head teacher, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also evaluated the school action plans, minutes of recent governing body meetings, local authority reviews and the school's monitoring and assessment documentation. You accompanied me during visits to all classes in the school, where we observed teaching and looked at pupils' work.

Main findings

You have improved teaching and achievement in important areas since the inspection. You modified your existing improvement plans and, with the support of the local authority, are tackling almost all of the issues identified. Governors are well-informed and are making a valuable contribution to the improvements.

Teaching is improving across the school. Pupils learn well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together, ensuring that their time is used effectively to promote learning. The outdoor area provides rich opportunities for pupils to learn through play. For example, a group of boys who were building a house from large plastic bricks talked about the problems that they faced with corners before finding a solution together. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is systematically taught. Pupils are making good progress because of very clear, structured teaching from teachers and teaching assistants. Although teaching is also improving in Key Stage 2, some inconsistencies remain. In some lessons, pupils of very different abilities do the same work: some find the work too hard, while for others it is too easy. This is not always the case, and pupils' work shows that there are times when pupils of all abilities work at a level that challenges them.

You are improving the quality of marking. Pupils in almost all classes receive helpful guidance on how to improve their work. This frequently involves teachers asking pupils to re-visit a piece of work, or inviting them to demonstrate that they now understand something. You have also increased the range of work that pupils experience in mathematics. Throughout the school, pupils' work shows that they are investigating and exploring problems more than before.

You have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Priorities and improvement plans are helpful. Your assessment data indicates that achievement is improving across the school and that, overall, the gaps between pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils are narrowing. Minutes from governors meetings show that they are holding leaders to account for the school's performance. Governors have a clear time-table for monitoring the work of the school. This is enabling them to become increasingly familiar with the work of the school.

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 is providing effective support through a range of strategies. A local authority advisor has supported the development of the school's approach to assessment. Paired observations of teaching and the scrutiny of pupils work have

validated your evaluation of teaching. The local authority has provided funding for two teachers to attend the improving teacher programme. You have also received support with the development of your improvement plans. In addition, you are also receiving leadership support from the diocese.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Cambridgeshire, and the diocese of Ely.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Moodie
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- DfE - Academies Advisers Unit [colin.diamond@education.gsi.gov.uk] – for academies