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Andy Leivers
Headteacher
Holy Trinity CofE Primary School
Trinity Road South
West Bromwich
B70 6NF

Dear Mr Leivers

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 4 April 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. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that teachers plan work which challenges all pupils and provides opportunities for them to work at the highest level.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you, your senior leadership team, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority to discuss actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school's plans for improvement and reviewed some of the school's achievement data. I visited all 10 classes during lessons, talked to a number of pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.

Context

One teacher has left since the last inspection and a temporary teacher has joined the staff.

Main findings

You, your senior leader and governors have worked with determination to tackle the area for improvement identified in the last inspection. You have sharpened the school's improvement plans to focus more clearly on the area for development. Your cycle for monitoring and evaluation links tightly to the priorities for improvement. Staff have a better understanding of what outstanding practice looks like because of the partnership with Grove Vale school. This has enabled your teachers to observe the outstanding teaching in Grove Vale and develop their expertise in planning lessons.

Teachers' planning is therefore improving. Teachers take better account of pupils' different starting points. They have higher expectations of what pupils can do but activities do not always provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to achieve at a higher level. Teachers are marking in more detail and ensuring there are follow up tasks to help pupils check their understanding and to improve their work.

Teaching assistants are deployed more effectively and their contribution to pupils' learning is more effective.

Pupils are reading more frequently. The books in the reading schemes do not reflect pupils' backgrounds sufficiently. You are aware of this and plans are in hand to broaden the range of contexts in which fiction and non-fiction texts are set. You are working more closely with parents to help them understand the ways in which they can support their child's reading.

Your focus on improving pupils' writing and the presentation of their work is beginning to pay dividends. Pupils' books showed that pupils have responded well to the increased opportunities provided for them to write at greater length in a broad range of subjects. Pupils are writing more frequently in all years. Children in Early Years Foundation Stage like wearing their writing belts and are writing more.

There are more opportunities for pupils to apply their understanding of mathematical concepts. Pupils are increasingly confident in understanding word problems. Teachers' questioning is improving and is helping pupils to explain more clearly how they solve problems.

Governors' practice is of a consistently high standard across the federation. All governors benefit from evaluating and challenging the leadership of the outstanding school and they have equally high expectations of both schools. Their work across the federation is enabling them to challenge you with greater confidence.

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 provides timely support and challenge to the school. A number of local authority consultants have provided support to staff that is tailored to meet their individual needs. The local authority has moderated teachers' assessments to ensure they are accurate. The work with Congreves, St John Bosco, and Harvilles Hawthorn schools is helping teachers and teaching assistants to improve pupils' attainment and progress.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Sandwell and the Diocese of Lichfield.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Parker
Her Majesty's Inspector