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Andy Tarrant
Acting Headteacher
Staverton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
School Lane
Staverton
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 6NZ

Dear Mr Tarrant

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Staverton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 23 May 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 January 2014. 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:

- Bring together the post Ofsted action plan and the school development plan into one document to help focus leaders and governors on monitoring and evaluating the impact of their work.
- Show in this plan how more able pupils will accelerate their progress in writing.
- Identify additional governors to assist in reviewing evidence of the impact of the action taken to raise achievement, and clarify in the improvement plan when and how this is to happen.
- Ensure more opportunity for literacy development through better quality debate and discussion in lessons.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the incoming headteacher, your deputy headteacher, the school improvement adviser and the Chair of the Governing Body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement action plan was evaluated. I visited lessons in all classes with you and considered pupils' current progress information. We looked at pupils' work with your deputy headteacher. I reviewed a range of documents including the local authority notes of visit, lesson observation forms and the meetings of the governing body.

Context

In September a substantive headteacher will take up post. The school is in The Mead Community Primary Teaching School partnership and draws on the support of the executive headteacher, a national leader for education.

Main findings

You have effectively galvanised staff to raise achievement across a range of subjects in Key Stage 1 and to improve writing in Key Stage 2. You have a very clear understanding of the priorities but the school action plans do not reflect this. The action plans set out too many targets to manage in a realistic time frame. The success criteria, whereby you measure the impact of action to show development, are too many. Consequently the main actions for improvement are obscured.

It was evident from our visits to lessons that Key Stage 1 pupils are motivated to write well, and write at length. There was genuine enthusiasm in their learning. They respond well to the new writing strategy that includes more boy friendly themes and have particularly enjoyed writing about dragons. Consequently, pupils' written work is improving and clearly showed the emphasis given to preparing for the writing tasks. The teaching assistants are well briefed on how to support pupils to write independently.

In Key Stage 2, teachers are still not using discussion as a tool for establishing how much pupils have understood or as a means to challenge pupils to do even better. We agreed that lesson planning did not always show how the targets for more able writers in Key Stage 2 were going to be met in the lessons. Some good work has gone on to secure improvement in the marking of written work. Teachers have benefited from well organised 'book looks' that have helped them check their judgements with each other. Teachers' comments are more accurate and as a result pupils are clear about what they have to do to improve.

You have organised the collection of tracking information well to show how different groups of pupils are making progress. This shows a rather mixed picture for the groups in Key Stage 2, particularly in Year 6. However, the progress of those eligible

for the pupil premium is accelerating quickly and the gap between their attainment and that of others has now closed to around a term. The well-targeted additional small group literacy and numeracy teaching has helped immensely.

Governors have reviewed how they are working and this is helping them challenge the work you are doing to improve the school. They have focused on reviewing the information about the progress that pupils are making. Governors are helped by your insightful reports on the quality of teaching and its impact on learning in lessons. The governors capacity to further evaluate and support the action being taken to improve the quality of learning in the school is being restricted because there are not enough governors involved.

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 support from the local authority for your interim leadership of the school has been effective. The school improvement adviser has provided the expertise to help you monitor teaching and learning diligently. The consistency and quality of feedback has motivated teachers to improve. Similarly working with the teaching alliance on improving management skills is helping leaders influence those they lead. As a consequence the local authority is rightly drawing back from further support.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Palk
Her Majesty's Inspector