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Karen Foster
Interim Executive Headteacher
Swineshead St Mary's Church of England Primary School
Abbey Road
Swineshead
Boston
PE20 3EN

Dear Mrs Foster

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Swineshead St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 08 July 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 March 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.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the interim executive headteacher and assistant head of school, the Chair of governors and Vice-chair, the school's literacy and mathematics co-ordinators, and a representative of the local authority. I toured the school, accompanied by some pupils, visiting almost all classrooms. The school's action plans and a self-evaluation document were evaluated. The single central record of recruitment checks was scrutinised.

Main findings

You and the senior leaders have taken action rapidly to secure a full, permanent staffing complement for September, for the first time in several years. You have also put in place a programme of monitoring activities, which have already led to a clear

identification of staff development needs. A programme of appropriate professional development has been put in place to meet those needs.

As part of the professional development programme, you have focussed sensibly on improving the staff's skills in assessing the pupils' work. That has been an essential first step in ensuring that the school has good-quality data about the pupils' progress. You have developed a system for using the data, to help improve the quality of teaching, and are anticipating the first collection of data imminently. You have also revised and improved the school's marking policy and have, already, checked to see that the teachers are using it.

You have revised the school's behaviour policy. The pupils told me that behaviour has improved and described some of the things you have done that have led to the improvement. It was apparent during my visits to classrooms, however, that not all of the pupils are paying as much attention in lessons, or taking part in question and answer sessions, as they could. The teachers are not yet ensuring that all of the pupils are paying full attention.

The review of governance has been completed and the newly re-constituted governing body met for the first time just before my visit. The governing body is at the earliest stage of implementing the changes that have been planned, as a result of the review. The school's action plans have several strengths and, importantly, are being used thoroughly by the governing body to monitor the school's progress. The plan does not, however, include all of the information that is needed, in order to ensure it has maximum impact.

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 provided by the local authority and the diocese and their swift response to the inspection has been essential to the recent and rapid progress at the school. It has been instrumental in completing the review of governance and responsible for arranging for the interim executive headteacher and assistant head of school to take up post. In addition, subject co-ordinators at the school are receiving effective support, which is helping them to respond enthusiastically to the clearer and more-extensive roles and responsibilities that they have been given.

The partnership between Swineshead St Mary's and its partner school within the federation has been rejuvenated. That has provided the staff at Swineshead St Mary's with extensive access to good practice at the partner school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Lincolnshire and the director of education for the Lincoln diocese.

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss
Her Majesty's Inspector