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Mrs L Oldbury
Headteacher
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The Nooking
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Dear Mrs Oldbury

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Haxey Church of England Primary School, North Lincolnshire

Following my visit to your school on 8 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. The school should take further action to:

- undertake the external review of governance and produce a governing body development plan.
- ensure the governing body has an effective forum in place to regularly check on:
 - the impact of planned actions in the school development plan
 - whether the school is on course to meet achievement targets at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
 - the progress pupils in each year group are making in reading, writing and mathematics
 - the quality of teaching across the school

- draw up individual support plans for teachers that require improvement. Ensure the support plans set out the programme of professional development the teacher will receive and how senior leaders will check on their progress.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, a group of teachers and teaching assistants, the acting Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. You accompanied me on a tour of the school to observe the learning environment, pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning. I evaluated the school's plans for improvement and scrutinised a range of other documents, including records of governing body meetings, checks on the quality of teaching and assessment data.

Context

Since the inspection, one teacher has left the school. There has been some staff absence, although most members of staff are now at work. The Chair of the Governing Body has resigned. Currently there is an acting Chair of Governors who will be formally appointed to the role in September.

Main findings

Although you were disappointed with the outcome of the previous inspection you understand the reasons why the school was judged to require improvement. You have quickly lifted staff morale and put in place plans to address the areas for improvement. Whilst these plans include appropriate actions, they do not include milestones that set out what the impact of planned actions should be at specific times across the next school year. This would help governors to determine whether or not the school is on course to become a good school.

Work to improve the quality of teaching is well underway, although some staff absence has hindered aspects of this work. Teachers told me they receive good feedback from senior leaders following the regular checks senior leaders make on pupils' books, and from lesson observations. In particular, feedback is helping them to improve the quality of their marking. The comments teachers write are now more specific and pupils now routinely are required to make corrections and improve aspects of their work. Teachers also focus more on the needs of the most able pupils when they plan lessons, and this is helping to ensure these pupils are challenged to think more deeply in lessons. Whilst these actions are improving the quality of teaching, some teachers require further support in order to become consistently good. You have also provided some training for teaching assistants and have arranged further training from the local authority in the near future.

Members of the senior leadership team have worked with the local authority adviser to strengthen their skills in evaluating the quality of teaching. They are also checking pupils' work regularly so that they have an accurate picture of what is happening in their areas of responsibility. They now intervene quickly when they identify weaker practice.

From my tour of the school it was clear that pupils have positive attitudes to learning and take pride in their work. The quality of handwriting is good, and this was reflected in the many good displays of work in classrooms and corridors.

Un-validated results from the 2014 Key Stage 2 SATs show an improvement in standards with more pupils making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

The external review of governance has not taken place. The school has commissioned the local authority to arrange the external review, but there have been delays and, as yet, no date has been set. In addition, the acting Chair of Governors lacks experience and does not have a mentor to provide the necessary advice and guidance. As a result, the governing body does not have an effective forum to check on the progress the school is making. In order to address this, the local authority has set up a progress team comprising of the headteacher, some members of the governing body and the local authority adviser. However, the group has only met once and governors are not clear about its role and remit. Some governors have undertaken training in order to develop the necessary skills to hold senior leaders accountable. However, the lack of knowledge across the wider governing body means they are unable to challenge effectively.

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 school adviser is providing good support to develop the skills of senior leaders in the school. As a result they are more effective in tackling weaknesses within their areas of responsibility. Further good support has been provided to develop the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.

However, the local authority has been slow to arrange the external review of governance. Greater efforts also need to be made to support the acting Chair of Governors and strengthen the skills of the governing body, so that they can check the school is on course to become a good school.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector