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Ms Kate Love
Headteacher
Folkestone, St Martin's Church of England Primary School
Horn Street
Folkestone
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CT20 3JJ

Dear Ms Love

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Folkestone, St Martin's Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 13 June 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in April 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.

Evidence

During the visit I met with you, the deputy headteacher, a member of the governing body and a representative from the local authority to discuss progress since my last visit. I observed pupil progress meetings for pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 attended by senior leaders, class teachers and a local authority advisor. Throughout the academic year you have kept me updated with reports of progress, including the impact of actions taken to accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment.

Main findings

Senior leaders and governors have worked with determination, precision, energy and ambition to bring about necessary improvements. A greater sense of urgency and purpose has pervaded the school. Evaluations of all aspects of school improvement have become more detailed and analytical. Evaluations are now a useful tool to determine and drive next steps. Teachers are fully aware of their own accountability in ensuring that all pupils learn and progress well and reach their individual targets. Teachers know every pupil well and can explain the strategies being used to help those who have previously fallen behind catch up, as well as the ways in which most able pupils are being continuously challenged. There is a shared sense that every single lesson makes a difference. Reviews of pupils' progress are held frequently and the efficacy of interventions checked. Fine adjustments are made to support programmes to ensure that the better rates of progress are maintained. Senior leaders and class teachers are confident in using data to evaluate the progress of individuals and groups. For example, you have clear records of the additional support given to those pupils entitled to the pupil premium and an analysis of the difference this support has made.

School tracking data demonstrate that throughout the school rates of progress have improved. Pupils currently in Year 6 have made rapid progress this year and many are working at the higher levels in English and mathematics. Their legacy of underachievement has been fully addressed. Data also show that younger pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing their early reading skills more quickly than in the past. The quality of feedback to teachers, following lesson observations, has improved. Teachers are clear about their own areas for improvement and any necessary support is provided. Monitoring of the quality of teaching by senior leaders and the local authority shows an increasing proportion of good and better teaching. Pupils' workbooks reveal a far greater quantity of work being completed to a significantly higher standard. Detailed marking provides genuinely helpful guidance to pupils about what to do next to improve their work even more.

Positive relationships with parents have been maintained and further built upon. Staff have a high profile at the school gate and in the playground at the beginning and end of the school day. Newsletters are published regularly and the school website kept up-to-date with a wide range of key information.

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 continues to monitor the school's progress closely. Minutes of meetings indicate that the local authority judges the school to have made outstanding progress recently in addressing the key areas for improvement. As a result, local authority considers that the school is well prepared for its next section 5 inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Hilary Macdonald
Her Majesty's Inspector