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17 September 2014

Mr Sam Nixon
Executive Headteacher
Carleton Rode Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School
Church Road
Carleton Rode
Norwich
NR16 1RW

Dear Mr Nixon

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Carleton Rode Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 September 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:

- link governor monitoring directly to key improvement priorities with clear indications of the sources of evidence they can draw on to validate success.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. You provided an extensive range of pupils' work, analysis of achievement, evidence from your monitoring of the quality of teaching and of the training and support teachers

have received to improve. We visited each class, looked at pupils' books and spoke to them about their work.

Context

The school works in the Jigsaw partnership with Kenninghall Primary School; you are the headteacher of both schools although they retain separate governing bodies. The partnership was formed to increase capacity at both schools with Kenninghall, a good school, initially providing support for Carleton Rode.

Since the last inspection, a new teacher has been appointed, class teaching responsibilities have been reallocated and a member of staff has been allocated responsibility for leading learning. You are moving to a new position at the end of term. Governors have procedures in place to appoint a new headteacher to the partnership from January.

Main findings

You are effectively using the capacity and expertise available through the jigsaw partnership to improve teaching and raise standards. This paired work between staff is improving teachers' planning, raising the quality and pace of pupils' learning and developing leadership at both schools. Improvement is also being informed by visits to other schools to observe good practice in planning and teaching mathematics and writing. A particular strength of teachers' development, reflected in the logs they keep of their learning, is the extent to which they are using what they see and learn to review and develop their own practice.

You have improved the marking of pupils' work and the feedback they receive on their progress; you are also improving the progress most pupils make by ensuring they encounter increasing challenges in their work on a daily basis. In the Year 5 and 6 class, the use of these strategies is demonstrably improving the quality of teaching and learning. Strong leadership of mathematics is raising expectations and improving teachers' knowledge of how they can best support pupils to improve their understanding.

Your plans for improvement identify appropriate actions and tight timescales by which you expect this will happen. You have implemented a monitoring calendar so that all staff and governors know what will be reviewed and when.

The progress of each individual pupil is now monitored carefully and you have accurate evidence to show that when pupils fall behind they receive well targeted support to help them to catch up. However, your analysis shows that more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged to make the progress of which they are capable.

Governors have continued to develop the work of the school improvement committee which was established just prior to the last inspection. As a result, they

review pupils' progress more regularly and through more frequent monitoring have established an improving understanding of achievement and of teaching and learning. This monitoring is not rigorous enough because it is not directly linked to the key priorities for improvement you are addressing and relevant sources of evidence they can draw on are not clearly identified.

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

A local authority challenge partner has provided effective analysis and confirmation of your evaluation of the school's work for governors. Since the inspection, working collaboratively with an adviser, you have identified training elements from the Norfolk 'Good to Great' programme which will support you and the staff to make the most rapid improvement. It is too early to evaluate the impact of this. Further work was agreed during the visit to support the school to continue to improve during the imminent change in leadership as you move to your new role.

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

Yours sincerely

Prue Rayner
Her Majesty's Inspector