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24 October 2014

Mrs Elizabeth Harros
Headteacher
St Anthony's Catholic Primary School
Dane Park Road
Hull
HU6 9AA

Dear Mrs Harros

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, City of Kingston upon Hull

Following my visit to your school on 23 October 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 June 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

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:

- ensure that the milestones in the English and mathematics improvement plans are replicated in the school improvement plan and that they occur at regular intervals so that leaders and governors can check if the school is moving forward appropriately
- identify why some groups of pupils make better progress than others throughout the school and put in measures to improve this situation
- make sure that all teachers consider carefully the topics taught to their pupils so that there is a sensible balance between those that appeal more to either girls or boys
- continue to take all appropriate opportunities to work with and learn from practice in other schools.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you and other members of the leadership team. I held a telephone conversation with the Director of Schools for the Diocese of Middlesbrough. You took me on a tour of the school to observe pupils at work and for you to demonstrate some of the changes that have been implemented since the inspection in June 2014. I analysed the most recent national test results and evaluated the school improvement plan and also those relating to English and mathematics.

Context

There have been staff changes since the start of this term. Several classes are being taught by teachers either relatively new to teaching or who have recently qualified. The deputy headteacher has responsibility for English and the assistant headteacher has responsibility for mathematics throughout the school. The school is now linked with a new Standards and Improvement Officer from the local authority.

Main findings

You and your senior colleagues continue to demonstrate a strong determination to move the school forward and to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. There have been improvements and you have already put in place some systems as a result of the inspection and the national test results in 2014. For example, all pupils are expected to present their work properly using accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. There is a consistent approach to the way pupils' books are marked and I saw this during our tour of the classrooms. You have made it clear that teachers need to check that pupils know how to improve and this approach is starting to embed.

The 2014 national test results together with the results for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage plus the phonics tests for pupils in Year 1 showed some improvement compared to the previous year. Nevertheless there were some significant gaps between the progress made by different groups of pupils. A key difference throughout the school is that pupils who are not eligible for free school meals generally make better progress than others. Leaders know that that all teachers must consider this and ensure that work in all lessons meets the needs of individual pupils correctly. Teachers are expected to guarantee that English and mathematics skills are used correctly in different lessons and this is becoming apparent. Careful monitoring must take place so that there is a sensible balance of topics taught between those that appeal more to either girls or boys throughout the year. As yet, it is too early to see the impact of this.

There are carefully designed improvement plans. However, you recognise that these need to be strengthened so that it is easier for governors and others to check if

improvements are being made at the speed you have indicated. At present, these goals do not occur regularly throughout the year.

I may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

You have a meeting with the Standards and Improvement Officer planned for later in the term and external consultants continue to provide support. You are taking every opportunity to link with other schools and learn from their practice. You attended recently the Better Mathematics course which was run by Her Majesty's Inspectors. You told me that this gave you a range of ideas and the mathematics leader also confirmed that some ideas and systems discussed during the course already in place are appropriate.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Kingston upon Hull and the Director of Schools for the Diocese of Middlesbrough.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector