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Ms Jacqui Kearney
Headteacher
All Saints CofE (Aided) Primary School
Norreys Avenue
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RG40 1UX

Dear Jacqui Kearney

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to All Saints CofE (Aided) Primary School

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 July 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:

- include more specific targets and actions in the school's main plan for improvement, and in the plans for literacy and mathematics, to specify where pupils' progress needs to accelerate this year and how this will be done.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, members of the governing body, including the Chair, a group of teachers, and a representative of the local authority. All meetings focused on the action taken

since the last inspection. The school's action plan and the plans for literacy and mathematics were evaluated. The inspector visited several classrooms with the headteacher.

Context

The acting headteacher, in post at the time of the last inspection, was appointed as headteacher in the second week of September. The school has a new Chair of Governors, who was formerly Vice-Chair. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is being covered temporarily by a member of the senior leadership team until a new leader joins the school in January 2015. Two newly qualified teachers started in September 2014.

Main findings

The headteacher and the senior leadership team have focused intently on raising teachers' expectations since the last inspection. Any weaker aspects of teaching, that could hold the school back from being judged good, are known and being tackled. The approach to planning lessons is becoming more consistent. This was evident from visits to some of the classrooms and from discussions with teachers. There is a clear understanding that all teachers must vary what they expect of pupils, based on pupils' differing capabilities and needs, and that teachers will adjust activities accordingly. Key stage and subject leaders scrutinise teachers' plans on a weekly basis and provide helpful, often extremely detailed, feedback for teachers to help them improve their plans further. Teachers who were spoken to were clearly appreciative of the guidance they received from senior leaders. There is clearly a sense of everyone pulling together to make All Saints a good school.

The headteacher and governors have acted promptly to improve the leadership of mathematics. A good deal has been achieved since the inspection. A member of the senior leadership team has taken on responsibility for mathematics and an appropriate plan is in place to improve the weaker aspects identified at the inspection.

Attendance is showing some improvement this term compared to the same period last year. The procedures for encouraging good attendance, and chasing up any pupils who miss school, or who are late, have been tightened up considerably. Parents are now being told, for example, the cumulative effect of lateness and how many hours their children have missed.

Since the inspection, the unvalidated results for 2014 have been released. Year 6 results were much better than those in 2013, with marked improvement in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment at Year 2 also improved in all three areas and more pupils in Year 1 reached the required standard in the national phonics check

than in 2013. These improvements show the school is certainly moving in the right direction and they provide a good basis on which to build.

The senior leaders know the year groups where pupils need to make better progress but these are not articulated clearly in the school's plans. While the action plan includes all the areas that required improvement, it is not specific enough about where pupils' learning and progress need to pick up. For example, data show that boys' literacy and mathematics skills in Year 1 are particularly weak; boys' knowledge of phonics is much weaker than girls' in Year 2; and, in Year 3, boys' and girls' writing needs significant improvement. In Year 3, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, who benefit from additional government funding (pupil premium), are too far behind the pupils from relatively more advantaged backgrounds. Leaders now need to use their knowledge of these weaker areas to pinpoint the specific aspects that need to be strengthened and add these, as priorities, to their plans.

Governors are familiar with the steps taken to improve on the weaknesses from the inspection. They are kept in touch with developments, by the headteacher, and are provided with key information to guide them when questioning leaders. There has been a delay in commissioning the required review of the school's use of the pupil premium while the governors and local authority find the right person, or body, to carry out this review. Time has gone on and it is important the review is commissioned without further delay so that the school has time to act upon the findings of the review, for the benefit of the pupils who receive the funding supports.

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 improvement officer and National Leader in Education, both of whom have supported the school previously, have provided appropriately tailored support since the inspection. Helpful coaching has been provided for middle leaders to develop their leadership skills, for example when they visit classrooms to observe learning. The impact of external support work can be seen in teachers' planning, which is becoming more precise and consistent, and, importantly, in pupils' improving achievement.

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

Yours sincerely

Margaret Dickinson
Her Majesty's Inspector