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Ms A Sturgeon
The Headteacher
Albourne CofE Primary School
The Street
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Dear Ms Sturgeon

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Albourne CofE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on Thursday 12 February 2015, 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 October 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:

- enable middle leaders to undertake their roles fully
- accelerate the rate of improvement being made by the governing body.

Evidence

During this inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, some middle leaders, two governors including the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. I visited classrooms with you, during which I spoke to some pupils and looked at some of their work. I also reviewed a range of

documentation, including the school improvement plan, evidence of monitoring undertaken by senior leaders and reports provided by the local authority.

Context

Since the previous inspection two teachers have left the school. There are currently temporary arrangements in place to cover their teaching.

Main findings

Under your determined guidance, leaders have successfully maintained the rate of improvement that was already evident at the time of the last inspection. You and other senior leaders have tirelessly focused on improving teaching. As a result, there have been significant improvements. Pupils are now more engaged in lessons and enthusiastic about their work. This is because teachers are beginning to make lessons more interesting. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils were taken outside to dig up 'treasure' that had been buried by 'pirates'. Pupils' resulting enthusiasm was harnessed by the teacher to develop their understanding of division.

Pupils are taking much more care in the presentation of their work. This is because teachers now share leaders' higher expectations. Teachers are making better use of their assessments of pupils' progress during lessons to ensure pupils, including the more able, are regularly challenged effectively. This is particularly well developed in Year 2, where teaching assistants are used to monitor pupils' progress effectively. This information is used well to adapt teaching and give extra challenge to pupils when it is needed.

The marking policy you have introduced is beginning to make a difference. In some classes, pupils' work is already marked consistently using the new policy. This has ensured pupils are clearer about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. There are still some classes, however, where teachers are not yet using the new policy fully enough. You are well aware of where this is the case and you know what action is required.

You have rightly changed how behaviour is managed at the school. You have introduced an effective behaviour policy. As a result, staff are clearer about expectations of behaviour in class and around the school. You involved pupils in developing this policy and pupils appreciated the way you took on board their suggestions. This, along with the improvements made to teaching, means behaviour is already better than it was at the time of the last inspection.

The development plan is effectively organised and responds well to the areas for improvement identified in the previous report. The processes you have introduced to

monitor, evaluate and improve teaching are now robust. You are already evaluating the impact of your work effectively.

Subject leaders for English and mathematics have very strong subject knowledge. They are well aware of what they need to do to be effective. However, they have not been given the opportunity to carry out their roles fully. As a result, they are not yet having enough impact on improving teaching and pupils' achievement.

Governors are still not providing robust enough challenge for leaders. The review of governance has started, but has been slow to get underway. While governors have a better understanding of what they need to do to carry out their roles, this is yet to have enough impact on their practice.

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

You and other school leaders have made good use of extensive and targeted support provided by the local authority. For example, support provided by the early year's consultant has improved provision in the Reception class. The local authority has also brokered effective support for you from St Lawrence Church of England Primary School, a local teaching school.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Barnes

Her Majesty's Inspector