

Serco Inspections
Colmore Plaza
20 Colmore Circus Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6AT

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T: 0121 679 9153
Direct email: naik.sandhu@serco.com



16 March 2015

Mrs Sarah Chaloner
Headteacher
Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School
Longlands Close
Crossbrook Street
Waltham Cross
Hertfordshire
EN8 8LU

Dear Mrs Chaloner

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 13 March 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in May 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:

- reduce the potential for conflicting advice to impede progress by working with the local authority adviser to make clear the intended impact of work with the partner school. To identify this and the other support you are receiving against key priorities in the improvement plan.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the deputy headteacher, the English subject leader, two members of the governing body and a local authority adviser to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I similarly, spoke to a representative of the Diocese by phone. I evaluated the school action plan and

monitoring schedule, analysis of achievement, records of staff performance management and of pupil progress meetings. We visited all classes together and spoke to teachers and children about the learning taking place; we looked at pupils' work and also at a wider sample of the work of pupils in Year 6.

Context

Since the last visit, two teachers have left the school and have been replaced on a temporary basis.

Main findings

Since the last inspection, with continuing challenge from the local authority, and the support of external advice, you have taken more rigorous action to address the weaknesses in teaching and leadership. For example, you have improved the challenge and advice given to teachers in discussions about the progress pupils in their classes are making. Development planning is better targeted on the most important priorities and your monitoring of how well actions are bringing about improvement is more regular and more sharply focused. While these changes are setting higher expectations of staff and pupils and there are improvements in the quality of teaching, the pace of this has been slowed by staff changes and the weaker aspects of the leadership of assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress you are challenging. The pace still needs to quicken if the school is to be judged to be good at its next inspection. Actions you are taking to address the weaknesses I are starting to make a difference. For example, to the increased accountability you are placing on staff for ensuring all the pupils they teach make good progress.

Governors have established a strategic school improvement group to monitor the work and impact of leaders more frequently. This is giving them a better understanding of the aspects of the school's work that need to improve rapidly. Because the Chair of the Governing Body wanted more detailed analysis of achievement, a new way of presenting this has been implemented. Governors have supported the use of more rigorous performance management procedures to hold teachers and leaders to account for making the required improvements to their practice.

Assessment information shows that achievement is continuing to improve. Your more detailed records demonstrate that you know who pupils at risk of underachievement are and that you have challenged teachers to better meet their needs, or implemented extra support for them. In almost all classes, pupils were engaged in their work and were enjoying their learning. The expectations teachers set are clearer and in most classes, teachers' marking is supporting pupils to understand how well they are doing. There are a few emerging examples of strong marking practice questioning pupils' understanding and challenging their thinking. Where this is the case, pupils are making improved progress. Pupils said they understand that marking shows them where they have achieved well and were keen

to discuss the 'seek and destroy' comments in their mathematics books which tell them where misconceptions need to be addressed. When teachers demand higher standards of all pupils, the quality of the presentation of pupils' work is improving. In Year 6, the teacher discussed the 'zero tolerance' approach being taken to ensure pupils understand that there is no place for poorly constructed or presented written work. In the examples shared, it is evident that pupils have responded to her demands and are making greater efforts to improve their work.

The English subject leader has received good support from the local authority adviser and an externally sourced coach to develop her new role. As a result, she has established stronger assessment and monitoring strategies and is supporting teachers to improve their practice.

External support

The local authority has continued to rigorously challenge the school through a review which found aspects of practice inadequate and a subsequent warning notice was issued. Whilst you and governors found this difficult, you have further sharpened aspects of leadership as a result. The Diocese has provided advice to governors on increasing the rigour of their role and there is growing evidence of the resulting challenges they are making of you and other leaders.

You are drawing on a range of support to aid improvement; this includes local authority advisers, a partner school and headteacher, diocesan representatives and a consultant headteacher. Not all of the related actions are identified in your planning and this, coupled with differing opinions has led to a weakening of their impact. Advisers have provided support for the improvement of teaching and learning in mathematics and this, along with your improved monitoring, is making a difference. Governors have continued to use the support of a data analyst because weaknesses in the leadership of this aspect of the school's work mean they have not received the level of information they now require.

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

Yours sincerely

Prue Rayner
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board

- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools