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Mrs Jacquelyn Pick
Seconded Headteacher
Newport Church of England Aided Primary School
Hazel Close
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 5DG

Dear Mrs Pick

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Newport Church of England Aided Primary school

Following my visit to your school on 3 December 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 April 2015. 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 in order to become a good school.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and the extended leadership team. I spoke with three members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I visited classrooms, spoke to pupils, scrutinised work in pupils' books alongside leaders in the school and evaluated the school improvement plan. I reviewed a range of documentation about the school's improvement work, including records of the checks made on teaching and learning.

Context

An experienced headteacher has been seconded to the school for the next three terms. In addition, a deputy headteacher and a pastoral leader have been appointed. One member of the teaching staff has left the school and two are leaving the school at the end of this term, including one senior leader. There are new leaders of English and ICT. One new governor has joined the governing body.

Main findings

You have taken appropriate and effective action to address the areas for improvement identified at your last inspection, wasting no time in tackling areas of weakness. Since your appointment, you have tackled inconsistencies in teaching and leadership robustly through the effective use of performance management arrangements. In addition, you have taken prompt action to improve the additional support pupils receive so that it helps them to catch up quickly. You have improved communication with parents. They appreciate new arrangements to ensure that teachers are available at the start of every day. Parents report that they feel more 'in touch' with the school through a new 'app', which shares daily updates about pupils' learning and achievement. You communicate a firm commitment to securing the highest calibre of staff at the school and inform parents quickly of any changes you make.

The school's improvement plan is coherent and well judged. Actions are carefully matched to the areas for improvement, and leaders' planned checks are set out clearly. The plan has clear milestones that set out how much progress pupils in all year groups are expected to make and by when. In addition, the plan ensures that priorities, such as improving the rates of attendance for pupils who are disadvantaged, are given an appropriately high profile. This group of pupils attend more regularly now than in the past, as a result.

The quality of teaching is more consistent in Key Stage 2 now because leaders make sure teachers get the right individual support, where necessary, to improve their skills. Teachers respond knowledgeably to pupils during lessons, reshape activities and move learning on with increased confidence and consistency. Pupils' attitudes to learning have improved because leaders have successfully introduced whole-school values, such as 'resilience' and 'teamwork'. All adults in the school show pupils these values in practice. As a result, pupils' attitudes to their work and their relationships with each other during lessons support their learning more positively.

Boys' writing, in particular, has improved because teaching is better now. Changes such as increasing the use of boy-friendly texts, widening opportunities to explore rich language and vocabulary and the use of web-based story and film to stimulate writing have been effective. Boys show higher levels of engagement and say that they feel more confident about their writing now than in the past. Work in books shows increased levels of accuracy and improving rates of progress. Performance

information shows that gaps in attainment between boys and girls in writing are closing. Leaders are not complacent, however, and know that there is still a lot to do to ensure boys in Years 4, 5 and 6 achieve as well as they should by the end of Key Stage 2.

Leaders in English and mathematics know what they need to do to improve pupils' progress in their subjects. They now check regularly to make sure teaching is securing improved rates of progress. Other curriculum subjects are beginning to be developed in a similar way now. The new ICT leader, for example, is ensuring that pupils study computing to the appropriate level of challenge, depth and regularity required in the new National Curriculum. However, leaders are not able to talk with sufficient depth about how well pupils are achieving in the wider range of subjects across the curriculum.

Governors have taken a firm grip of the improvements that they needed to make. Site risk assessments are checked thoroughly. Stringent checks are now made on performance management decisions so that pay awards are linked appropriately to high-quality teaching and leadership. This term, governors captured the increasingly positive views of parents towards the leadership of the school through a number of new forums. Governors have secured consistency in the leadership of the school over the next academic year and are sensibly considering a range of possible alternatives for leadership of the school in the longer term.

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

External support

The local authority continues to play an effective role in the improvement of this school through its brokerage of effective leadership, external validation of improvements and the provision of consultancy. Middle leaders use this consultancy well to help them improve teaching and assessment. The local authority has an accurate view of the school and rightly recognises that leadership within the wider curriculum is an area for further improvement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Abigail Wilkinson
Her Majesty's Inspector