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28 June 2016

Suzanne Shackleton  
Headteacher  
Romsley St Kenelm's CofE Primary School  
Bromsgrove Road  
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Halesowen  
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Dear Mrs Shackleton

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Romsley St Kenelm's CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 8 June 2016, 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 November 2015. 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:

- embed the actions taken so far to ensure that new staff are trained and supported and developments remain sharply focused
- ensure that the school's website is up to date and meets all of the latest Department for Education's statutory requirements.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders, a representative of the local authority and three members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school's post-inspection action plan, raising achievement plan and self-evaluation information were evaluated. A learning walk visiting all classrooms was undertaken with you and the deputy headteacher. Pupils' work books were

scrutinised, along with the school's current assessment information, safeguarding records and recent external reports about the school's progress. Informal discussions were held with pupils and parents.

### **Context**

Since the last inspection, three governors and two office staff have been appointed. Three new teachers have been appointed to replace the three teachers who are leaving the school at the end of this term.

### **Main findings**

Leaders have increased their expectations of teachers and pupils and taken effective steps to improve the work of the school. Governors are holding staff to account more rigorously and have supported the changes the headteacher has made.

You have worked closely with the deputy headteacher and the governors to appoint new staff and improve the monitoring of actions, such as raising standards in English. Teachers have taken on board the changes leaders have introduced, such as developing questioning and having greater expectations of the quality and quantity of pupils' writing. Informal discussions with parents indicate that they are very supportive of the school and complimentary about the actions it takes to support pupils. Most parents were not aware of the previous weaknesses in the school and say that the homework system has recently improved. Staff and governors have taken positive steps towards improving the work of the school and recognise that further work is needed to embed the changes and improve consistency across the school.

The school's action and raising achievement plans are detailed and are clearly focused on the areas for improvement recommended as a result of the last full inspection. There is evidence that the school's actions are helping to improve pupils' progress, especially in reading, writing and questioning. A package of training and external support has been put in place for teachers and teaching assistants to improve their skills in assessing pupils' progress. Action plans have been shared with parents to keep them informed of developments since the last inspection. However, such plans have not been added to the school's website, which needs updating to include information for parents to meet the Department for Education's statutory requirements.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding policies and procedures are kept up to date and staff are kept informed of any changes. As a result of effective systems which all staff maintain in school, pupils are safe in this school. The safeguarding governor regularly monitors this work. Leaders are aware that safeguarding systems need to be continually monitored, to ensure that procedures are kept up to date and new staff clearly understand the school's systems.

The culture of learning in the school has been improved by a greater focus on quality and better, well-resourced learning environments. For example, pupils strive to find better words to improve their writing and have responded well to the school's new reading challenges. Leaders have used checks to assess the impact of the school's marking and feedback policy and improved the policy as a result. Pupils' work books show that teachers are applying the policy and the changes have improved the impact of teachers' marking and feedback. The school's current assessment information shows that nearly all pupil groups are progressing well and that previous attainment gaps are closing. The assessment system has been improved to enable all teachers to have a much clearer picture of the progress both groups and individual pupils are making. The current leader for pupils with special educational needs or disability is leaving the school at the end of this academic year.

The teaching, learning and assessment provision in Reception has seen some improvement as a result of support from a local teaching school alliance and higher expectations from leaders. However, leaders are aware that there is more work to do to ensure that pre-school assessment information is used effectively and Reception children make the gains of which they are capable.

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 school has received effective support from the local authority in the form of school improvement adviser visits. The local authority has also brokered support from other schools to help develop subject leadership and teaching at St Kenelm's. Project board meetings have provided a useful steer for governors to monitor the school's actions carefully.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Worcestershire local authority.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Bellworthy

**Her Majesty's Inspector**