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Mrs Donna Prenton
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Dear Mrs Prenton

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Saughall All Saints Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 24 April 2017, 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 March 2016. 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.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that teachers have opportunities to observe best practice at other local schools
- continue to develop the role of middle leaders of non-core subjects, such as history and geography, so that they have a greater impact on teaching, learning and assessment
- ensure that the website is compliant with the information that must be published and that it is checked on a regular basis to ensure that it remains so
- continue to develop the role of the governing body so that it offers the highest level of challenge to the school.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings and discussions with you, the deputy headteacher, middle leaders, governors and pupils to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. A telephone call was also held with a representative from the local authority to ascertain their views on how well the school is addressing the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The school's development plan was evaluated, alongside other documentation that you provided. Together we looked at examples of pupils' work and undertook a learning walk to observe teaching and learning in key stages 1 and 2.

Context

There have been a significant number of staff changes since the last inspection. An assistant headteacher has been seconded from another school to support senior leaders in raising the profile of mathematics. This placement ends in July 2017.

Main findings

Although disappointed with the outcome of the last inspection, you and senior leaders wasted no time in putting together an action plan to address the areas for improvement highlighted at the last inspection. The development plan is coherent and identifies a wide range of practical strategies to improve practice across the school, most notably in mathematics. Milestones are realistic and linked to specific outcomes for pupils. Lines of accountability are clear and actions are regularly monitored, reviewed and often achieved.

Middle leaders now take an active part in monitoring the quality of teaching across the school, alongside you and your deputy headteacher. The quality of teaching is monitored closely through formal lesson observations, work scrutiny, planning reviews and learning walks. You recognise that any feedback given to teachers after formal lesson observations and looking at pupils' work should focus sharply and succinctly on the progress that different groups of pupils are making. Any actions set for teachers to improve the quality of teaching are now followed up swiftly. Such good practice ensures that teachers are now held more accountable in helping to raise standards across the school.

Since the last inspection considerable emphasis has been put on developing staff's use of questioning. Staff have observed each other's practice and have received coaching and training. However, staff do not have opportunities to observe best practice at other schools within the locality to develop further their use of questioning and other aspects of their teaching. As we toured the school I observed some teachers using questioning which probed and deepened pupils' understanding. Pupils also told me that the questions that teachers now ask them encourage them to think hard.

As a result of the last inspection findings, there has been a strong focus on developing pupils' problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy skills. Significant changes have been made. In addition to staff training, pupils are now streamed for mathematics, which ensures that activities are pitched at the correct level to drive forward pupils' learning. Booster classes are now available to support the most able pupils in developing their mathematical skills to a higher standard. Parents have attended workshops to give them an understanding of how to develop their children's mathematical skills at home. Looking at a sample of pupils' books, it is clear that the school is tackling this issue with vigour. Pupils now have frequent opportunities to solve problems. Older pupils develop their reasoning skills by recording, in their workbooks, the strategies they have used to solve problems. Younger pupils verbally tell their teacher how they have worked out their answers.

The marking policy has been revised and a review of pupils' books shows that it is now consistently followed by all teaching staff. Pupils also confirm that this is the case. They described how their work is marked 'quickly' and next steps and challenges are set to extend and deepen their learning.

Subject leaders of English and mathematics have a firm grasp of their subjects. They have a secure understanding of the quality of teaching and the progress that different groups of pupils make as they move through the school. We both agree that the role of the leaders of other subjects is not as well developed.

A common understanding of standards and progress is now a central aspect of the school's work with regard to English and mathematics. Such effective practice ensures that staff now have a clearer understanding of year group objectives and expectations. Consequently, teachers are now more able to use assessments accurately to plan tasks which challenge pupils of different abilities.

A review of governance has taken place and an action plan developed to address the issues raised. Governors have undertaken additional training and as a result, the level of challenge they offer to the school is rising. They are clearly committed to driving forward improvement and hold you in high regard. You recognise the importance of developing their roles further so that they hold the school and its senior leaders to account with even more rigour.

The school website is bright and easy to navigate. However, the information provided does not meet current guidelines. There is insufficient detail regarding the curriculum. The special educational needs report is not updated annually and does not evaluate the effectiveness of the provision provided. Furthermore, there is no information on how the pupil premium funding for this academic year is being spent.

Although not identified as areas for improvement at the last inspection, it was noted that pupils' appreciation of other cultures was not well promoted and their understanding of British values was limited. Both of these issues have been

addressed. Pupils told me that they celebrate a varied range of cultural festivals and have developed links with a school in Uganda. Examples of their writing clearly show that pupils now have a good understanding of British values. In fact, during my discussions with a group of pupils they shared their views, most eloquently, on the reasons why the Prime Minister has called a general election.

External support

The school is receiving good support from the local authority. Training and support have been provided to help staff develop their teaching skills, particularly in English and mathematics. The local authority has also provided support and guidance with moderation and in monitoring the quality of teaching. This support has been pivotal in moving the school forward.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Chester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cheshire West and Chester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow
Her Majesty's Inspector