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Mr R Harris
Headteacher
Eton Wick Church of England First School
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Dear Mr Harris

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Eton Wick Church of England First School

Following my visit to your school on 12 June 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 February 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 leaders and governors have a sharp understanding of where teaching needs to improve the most, and tackle this swiftly
- gain further external support to help accelerate the school's journey to becoming good.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also met with the chair of the governing body and two other governors. I evaluated the school's action plan and scrutinised other documents, including information about pupils' achievement. We looked at English teaching in every class in the school. I met with senior leaders. I also met with two representatives from the local authority together with a representative from the Diocese of Oxford's education team.

Context

Since the previous inspection, all but one teacher has left the school and been replaced. The deputy headteacher is on maternity leave. She will return in September 2017 as a part-time teacher. An acting deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2016. She will continue in the role on a permanent basis from the start of next term. You finished your part-time role as executive headteacher of another primary school in September 2016. From then until January of this year, you taught a class for three days a week to cover a staff vacancy.

Main findings

You have overcome significant challenges that arose following the last inspection. Despite high staff turnover and reduced leadership capacity, the school is improving. You acted swiftly to reorganise the teaching of phonics. More frequent sessions, with a sharper focus on pupils' needs, are helping pupils to gain a better grasp of phonics skills. Leaders' improved attention to pupils' progress is making a difference. You have made sure that assessment information shows exactly how well each pupil is progressing from their individual starting point. You make good use of this improved information and hold frequent pupil progress meetings. Pupils who are falling behind receive extra support more swiftly than was previously the case. This includes improved support for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, pupils' progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils, is improving in English and mathematics.

You are working effectively to reduce pupils' absence. You have improved the way you look at attendance information. Leaders and governors can now see at a glance the attendance pattern for each pupil and across the school. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have markedly improved their attendance. Leaders' increased emphasis on the importance of good attendance and improved engagement with parents have contributed well to this.

Leaders have undertaken limited checks on the quality of teaching. As a result, you do not have an exact enough understanding of the quality of teaching. You recognise that this hampers your wish to provide staff with training and support focused precisely on what they need to improve the most. This lack of clarity is

evident in the school development plan. The plan contains some suitable actions. However, it does not clearly define the starting points for each or the precise impact these actions should have on teaching and pupils' achievement, by key points in time. As a result, the plan is not a sharp tool for driving swift improvement.

Governors have responded well to the hard-hitting external review of governance. Governors are gaining a sharper understanding of assessment information. Typically, they now have available the information they need to check that pupils' achievement is improving. Approaches to managing staff performance are tighter. Individual governors now take responsibility for and look more deeply at strands of the school's work, such as the use of the pupil premium. Consequently, governors are more able to question and challenge leaders than was previously the case. Nevertheless, governors still have a limited understanding of the quality of teaching. As a result, they are cannot hold you sharply to account for tackling the areas of teaching which need to improve the most.

External support

The quality of external support has improved. You now benefit from regular visits from a local authority officer and an officer from the diocese's education team. They provide you with helpful support and challenge. The support provided by local authority officers in arranging the external reviews of the use of the pupil premium funding and the effectiveness of governance resulted in helpful reports, which have aided improvements. Beyond this, you have received limited external support.

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

Yours sincerely

Diana Choulerton
Her Majesty's Inspector