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Michelle Bamford
Worlebury St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School
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Dear Mrs Bamford

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Worlebury St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 1 December 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 2017. 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 boys' achievement improves so that the differences between girls' and boys' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are diminished
- identify precise progress milestones in the development plan so that governors are able to carefully check the progress that pupils are making in each year group.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other leaders and members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also had a telephone call with a representative of the local authority. School improvement plans and other key school documents were discussed and evaluated. Together, we

looked at learning across the school, including looking at pupils' workbooks. I also met with some pupils and looked at their work.

Context

There have been several changes to the teaching staff since the inspection in February. There are three new teachers who joined the school in September this year. All have taken on leadership responsibilities as part of their roles.

Main findings

Working closely with your deputy, you have acted with urgency and rigour to raise the expectations across the school since the previous inspection. Some pupils have experienced several changes in teachers during this time, which has been unsettling, both for them and for their parents. You have recognised this and extra support is in place to ensure that these pupils can now catch up and benefit from a more stable teaching situation. Many parents were keen to describe how much happier and more confident they are in the quality of teaching and learning at the school.

There are some new governors in post and the governing body has reviewed and improved how they provide challenge to leaders to ensure that rapid improvement is made. With support from your governing body, you have secured a new, experienced team of teachers who share your drive and vision to deliver high-quality teaching and learning. These new staff are also helping to shape improved leadership across the school. They provide support as well as challenge to their colleagues and lead their areas of responsibilities with a determination to improve outcomes for pupils further. Morale is high and there is a sense of optimism and excitement about the future.

Teachers respond well to the coaching and guidance as well as the detailed, frequent feedback that leaders provide. Newly qualified teachers receive extra support and they value this. As a school team, you are rapidly developing a consistent understanding of the core practices that define teaching at the school. Together with your leadership team, you share honest evaluations of how well the school is moving forward in the areas identified at the previous inspection. Your plans clearly and precisely map out next steps for improvement. We agreed that even sharper milestones that show precisely the progress for each year group would support governors in checking the progress being made across the school.

You have rightly focused on raising expectations, ensuring that pupils' work is more challenging. Pupils have noticed this shift. Comments from pupils included, 'Your brain has to work harder. Now, we don't just have to answer, we have to say why.' The new assessment system is supporting you to be far more precise in checking the progress that pupils make. Current information shows that since September, more pupils, including the youngest children and disadvantaged pupils, are making

much better progress than previously and many more are now working at the standards expected for their age. Pupils' workbooks confirm this. Many, including the most able pupils, are starting to thrive as teachers' expectations rise. In mathematics, pupils are using their skills to work out problems. They choose from a rich range of mathematical resources to help them.

When writing, pupils enjoy the links to their learning in other subjects such as history. They work to develop and refine their writing through the drafting, editing, proofreading and publishing sequence. With a closer match of work to their needs, pupils' attitudes towards their learning has improved. Your work to support families with attendance is also making a difference. Some pupils with previously low attendance are now attending more often.

The more precise information now available about the progress pupils make, shows that girls are making better progress than boys and are achieving better outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. Your continued drive to raise standards includes exploring how to diminish this gap, and you have started work with the boys to determine how they learn best.

External support

The local authority provides continued support and monitoring of the improvements being made through regular visits from a school improvement adviser. These visits are effective as they provide advice as well as an external check on how quickly the school is moving forwards. Leaders also work with other local schools. This helps to make sure that the assessments that teachers make are accurate.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the diocese of Bath and Wells, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tonwen Empson
Her Majesty's Inspector