

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancs Investment Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 0300 1231231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566937
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
jsimmons@cfbt.com



11 February 2013

Mr Anthony Gleeson
Headteacher
St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale
Pot Hall
Wilton Grove
Heywood
Lancashire
OL10 2AA

Dear Mr Gleeson

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale

Following my visit to your school on 8 February 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. 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 . It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the Chair and three other members of the Governing Body and a group of pupils. A meeting was also held with two representatives from the local authority and the headteacher (Local Leader in Education) who is supporting the school. The school's development plan was also evaluated.

Context

There are no significant changes since the most recent inspection,

Main findings

Currently, there is no effective development plan in place that can provide a good basis, or clear direction, to support school improvement. Planning consists of a list of intentions. This does not clearly structure how teaching is to be improved or how leadership and management and the contribution of the governing body are to become more effective. As a result, although some changes have taken place, these lack the cohesion to have a real lasting impact. There is a clear desire to improve but a lack of current momentum in speeding-up the changes required.

Monitoring by senior leaders is more frequent and visible but needs to be more rigorous in challenging weaker practice. Pupils have also noticed some positive changes such as more active learning in some lessons such as science, where they have more frequent opportunities to conduct experiments. Marking and feedback is generally more specific and informs them more clearly how they are to improve. Although there are plans to improve teaching through peer mentoring, sharing of good practice and providing greater challenge application remains fragmented. There is also some evidence that intervention strategies are having an impact on improving literacy but the school is struggling to meet its' end of year targets in mathematics. Practice remains inconsistent and, as a result, improvement is patchy across the school. Strategies to improve the role of subject leaders so they are able to make a more effective contribution towards raising attainment and improving the quality of teaching are also limited and lack cohesion or a clear sense of purpose.

Governors are not yet fully involved in evaluating the work of the school and acknowledge the need for further training and support. Although some governors have participated in training provided by the local authority to help them understand how to analyse the school's data, further guidance is needed. A governors monitoring committee has also been formed. However, governors require further training to help them securely check and identify what is happening in school for themselves. There is no clear plan in place to support their development or ability to challenge school leaders in order to increase their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection and plans are not sharply focused on rapidly bringing about improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- ensure that the school development plan identifies and specifies precise actions, clear timescales, outcomes, success criteria and the personnel and resources needed to secure more rapid improvement
- support governors in developing their knowledge and skills to enable them to evaluate the impact of the school's actions. This should include a self-evaluation to identify specific training and development needs with clear targets linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan
- ensure leaders and staff work with the local authority officers and attached headteacher to implement the strategies identified in the development plan in order to secure improvement and greater consistency in attainment and teaching
- develop the role and expertise of subject leaders to enable them to support improvements and be more accountable for developments in their area of responsibility
- monitor the impact of initiatives in order to be able to identify where more focussed support and resources need to be directed in order to speed up progress.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority has maintained a good level of support. This has included data training for governors, consultant support for teachers, particularly to develop writing. The school has been paired with a headteacher from a local outstanding school to provide advice and support improvement planning. There are also clear plans in place to check the quality of senior management monitoring, especially the quality of their teaching observations and assessment of pupils' work. Further training is also planned for governors to enable them to understand their key responsibilities. In addition the local authority has agreed to monitor and assess the progress being achieved prior to a future visit from Her Majesty's Inspector.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Rochdale.

Yours sincerely

Leszek Iwaskow

Her Majesty's Inspector