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22 March 2013

Mrs Sue Roper
Headteacher
Walsh Church of England Junior School
Ash Street
Ash
Surrey
GU12 6LT

Dear Mrs Roper

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Walsh Church of England Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 22nd March 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 January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school's development plan was evaluated and records of progress and the monitoring of teaching and learning were scrutinised.

Context

There have been no significant changes since the last inspection. A deputy headteacher, who had been working with the school on a part-time seconded basis since December 2012, has now accepted the substantive post of deputy headteacher at the school to start in the summer term.

Main findings

Prior to the January 2013 inspection, the headteacher and local authority were already addressing the weaknesses identified in the inspection report. This work has continued since the inspection. The school improvement plan is rightly focused on the key areas of improving the quality of teaching and strengthening leadership at all levels in order to tackle underperformance quickly. The improvement plan has realistic milestones, although the plan would be enhanced by more specific and quantifiable success criteria in the section on improving behaviour for learning. There have been many activities aimed at improvement, such as more frequent and systematic monitoring of teaching and learning, including the quality of marking and feedback. There has also been an increased focus on pupil progress which has been tracked, checked and analysed carefully in order to plan more effective interventions. A review of governance is planned for early in the summer term, and following some training and the advice of an Additional Skills Governor, the governors are beginning to ask more challenging questions and have gained a greater understanding of how to hold the school to account. Governors are working more closely and effectively with school leaders and staff to bring about improvements, particularly in behaviour for learning.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- continue to develop governors' ability to ask challenging questions and hold the school to account
- strengthen senior leaders' ability to improve teaching and learning through monitoring teachers' work.

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

External support

Prior to the last inspection the local authority had been supporting the school as a high priority. Following the inspection support has continued and the school has benefited from the work of the school improvement advisor, a consultant headteacher to advise and coach the headteacher, subject specialist advisors working with English and mathematics and a specialist from the behaviour support team. This high level of support is having a visible impact, strengthening leadership and supporting planned improvements in teaching and behaviour. The school has also drawn upon a programme of training for senior leaders from the diocese. HMI recommend that this level of support continues in order to establish an effective senior leadership team so that improvements in the school can be sustained.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Surrey, and the Director of Education for the Diocese of Guildford.

Yours sincerely

Janet Pearce

Her Majesty's Inspector