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23 April 2013

Mrs L. Brown
Headteacher
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
Hullenedge Road
Elland
West Yorkshire
HX5 0QY

Dear Mrs Brown

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit to St Patrick's Catholic Primary School on 23 April 2013

Following my visit to your school on 23 April, 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

I held meetings with the headteacher, with senior and middle leaders, with three members of the governing body. In addition, I held telephone conversations with the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. During my visit I evaluated the school's improvement plans, looked at documents relating to the work of the school and was taken on a tour of the school.

Context

Since the inspection, there have been no changes in staffing. An additional local authority governor has been appointed and is due to start shortly.

Main findings

The headteacher, governors and the local authority all agree that the priorities for improvement and the judgements reached by the inspection were the correct ones. Since the inspection, the school has reorganised the teaching of some infant classes to provide additional teaching to support their goal of better pupil progress. The headteacher has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching in the school and appropriate plans are in place to support those teachers who are identified as needing to improve to good. In

particular, the school is working with a cluster of local schools to support its plans to improve pupils writing. Although the first review of the effectiveness of this strategy is to be conducted by the local authority in the near future, initial information about pupils' progress shows this is beginning to have an impact.

Members of the governing body have received training about how to interpret the school's performance data. They have also attended training about the writing strategy and the system of performance management which is being extended to included support staff. The Chair of Governors is undertaking specific training for her role. A review of governance has yet to be undertaken. Governors agree that the current school improvement plan needs reviewing to enable them to keep a more detailed check on the quality of teaching and the progress and standards achieved by pupils. To do this they need to ensure that the school's improvement plans contain precise and measurable criteria and milestones.

Both senior and middle leaders have been partnered with leaders from other local schools with a proven track record of school improvement. Leaders have improved systems for tracking the progress pupils make and this is now providing valuable information about which pupils are not making enough progress. This information is being used to hold teachers to account and is to form part of their appraisal.

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:

- Review the school's action plans to include measurable milestones and criteria, and ensure that governors are able to clearly measure the progress of improvements each term.
- Undertake the review of governance identified at the last inspection

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

External support

The local authority has an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It has brokered a variety of support for leaders and governors and has a suitable strategy for reviewing the progress of the school. The school is also accessing a range of useful support from other school partnerships to support the training needs of teachers. This is enabling teachers to observe good practice in other schools and to raise their expectations.

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

Yours sincerely

Adrian Guy

Her Majesty's Inspector