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Mr David White
Headteacher
St John's CofE Primary School
Raymoth Lane
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Nottinghamshire
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Dear Mr White

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St John's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 22 May 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, the governing body and an associate advisor commissioned by the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated. A tour of the school was taken with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The findings of school and governor monitoring activities and the performance management of staff were discussed.

Context

There have been no significant contextual changes within the school since the section 5 inspection. The Chair of the Governing Body and the Vice Chair of the Governing Body have exchanged roles this term.

Main findings

The school has produced an action plan which makes clear its aims and priorities. The arrangements for monitoring and the timescales to work to are specific. Targets for staff are now better linked to school improvement. Senior leaders and governors are exceptionally well focused and are making a rapid impact on developing the quality of teaching and on raising pupils' achievement. There is still more to do on developing subject leadership, particularly in literacy and mathematics, to ensure that opportunities for pupils to practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills are maximised in all subject areas. Individual governors have undertaken much additional training to equip them to understand school data and challenge senior leaders about the school's performance. They are keen to undertake further training as a whole governing body to help them in fully understanding their monitoring role and how best to organise this.

A greater proportion of teaching is now consistently good. There has been a drive on improving writing and teachers are more explicit in their feedback to pupils, making clear how they can improve their work and informing them of their next steps. The displays and the reminders to help pupils' learning on the classroom walls are highly effective in Key Stage 2, but this is not the case in every classroom. The school analyses the impact of extra support and interventions used with pupils who require additional help. However, this information has not been pulled together in a way that enables school leaders and governors to easily assess whether the school is making best use of the additional 'pupil premium' funding.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure the quality of the displays and learning walls effectively promote learning in every classroom
- provide opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subject areas, and adapt the activities so that they are appropriately challenging for all learners
- analyse the impact of support and intervention for any pupils eligible for free school meals or who are identified as having additional needs succinctly, so that provision can be discussed by all school leaders and acted upon
- develop the role of governing body through action planning which links to wider school improvement planning, and includes checking school procedures for setting staff targets and the use of 'pupil premium' funding.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school is drawing effectively on a range of external support. Staff are making good use of other local schools to help them recognise good and outstanding practice. The local authority is helping staff understand the links between pupils' assessment and lesson planning, developing subject leaders, and providing advice to the governing body.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector