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11 December 2013

Mrs Nicola Oliphant  
Headteacher  
Holy Trinity CofE (C) Primary School  
Wetmore Road  
Burton-on-Trent  
Staffs  
DE14 1SN

Dear Mrs Oliphant

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Holy Trinity CofE (C) Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 10 December 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 September 2013. 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. The school should take further action to ensure that:

- subject leaders fully develop their skills of monitoring and improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.
- plans for improvement are linked with achievement milestones for groups of pupils, such as disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils who are eligible to be supported by pupil premium funding
- teachers' marking and the quality of presentation in pupils' books are consistently good in all classes
- governors continue to improve their understanding of how to use assessment data to check pupils' achievement and hold the school's leaders to account.

**Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you, a representative of the local authority, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also held a telephone conversation with an external consultant employed by the school to help with school improvement. I evaluated the school's plans for improvement, checked the school's safeguarding register, reviewed examples of the school's achievement data and read local authority reports about the school. I visited all classrooms, observed teaching, talked to a small number of pupils and looked at samples of pupils' books.

**Context**

Since the last inspection which judged the school to require improvement, one teacher has left the school and has now been replaced. The Chair of the Governing Body has resigned and has been replaced by the previous Vice-Chair. A new Vice-Chair has been appointed from within the governing body. Out of the six class-based teachers at the school, three started this term.

**Main findings**

Plans for improvement are in place and are being acted upon. They clearly identify the actions the school must take to improve and have termly milestones which show what pupils need to achieve to make consistently good progress. The inclusion of achievement milestones for groups, such as disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils who are eligible to be supported by pupil premium funding, would enable you, other school leaders and governors to check more effectively if all pupils are making at least good progress.

The regular pupils' progress meetings between you and the teachers are raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers now know the levels pupils must reach by the end of each term. The current school achievement information shows that teachers are rising to the challenge, with the large majority of pupils across the school now making good progress.

Our visits to classes showed many strengths in teaching. In particular, teachers and teaching assistants were engaging pupils' interests through clear demonstrations and effective questioning. Although there were many examples of good marking with clear advice to pupils how to improve their work, the quality of marking was inconsistent. The presentation of pupils' work in books was sometimes untidy.

Your reorganisation of the responsibilities of the school's leaders is beginning to have a positive impact on improving leadership and management. The new manager for mathematics has received training and has led sessions for staff in many aspects of the teaching of mathematics. Work with parents on how to support their

children's learning in mathematics is also underway. However, the subject leaders are still very inexperienced in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility and, consequently, are not yet making a full contribution to raising achievement.

The examples I saw of your own written feedback following lesson observations gave detailed advice to teachers how to improve their teaching. The feedback is now much more related to the impact of the teaching on pupils' progress. The emphasis you place on the achievement of pupils of different abilities during lesson observation and feedback helps teachers be more aware of the need to provide challenging work for all groups of pupils.

The newly appointed Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body have a secure understanding of their role in providing support and challenge to the school's leaders. They have reorganised the governors' committees so that there is now a greater focus on pupils' achievement. You have provided training for the Chair of the Governing Body on assessment data. It is essential that governors continue to improve their understanding of how to use assessment data to check pupils' achievement and hold the school's leaders to account. An external review of the effectiveness of the governing body is to take place next term.

### **External support**

The local authority has been slow to react to the findings of the last inspection where the school was judged to require improvement. The school has received very little support to date and has relied on advice and guidance from an independent external consultant. Local authority support, especially to improve governance, strengthen subject leadership and improve achievement in mathematics, is essential if the school is to get to good by the time of the next inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**