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Mrs Julia Havlickova
Headteacher
Pytchley Endowed Church of England Primary School
High Street
Pytchley
NN14 1EN

Dear Mrs Havlickova

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Pytchley Endowed Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 17 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 October 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.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors. I spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone. In these meetings, we discussed the actions taken since the last inspection. I visited every class, spoke to pupils informally, and looked at their work. The school action plan was evaluated and I scrutinised additional school information, including the records you keep of the monitoring of the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making.

Context

There have been no significant changes since the previous section 5 inspection.

Main findings

You responded quickly and positively to the findings of the last inspection. Your development plan is correctly focused on the areas for improvement set out in your inspection report. Well-defined, measureable actions to improve teaching are linked to a robust system for checking their success in order to secure good achievement for all groups of pupils. Clear, challenging targets for improved outcomes demonstrate a sense of urgency within the plan that sends a strong message to all staff that you and the governors are determined to be judged 'good' at your next inspection. The plan makes it clear how you and other leaders are checking the success of actions and also how the governors are holding you to account for the actions you are taking to improve the attainment and progress of pupils.

It was clear from my visit that the English and mathematics coordinators share your determination to bring about improvements at a swift pace. As a team, you have developed stronger systems for judging the performance of teachers. You look at a wider range of evidence in order to identify more precisely the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. You identify individual teacher's training needs and focus support exactly where it is needed. This is bringing about rapid improvement in the quality of teaching because teachers know what they need to do in order to improve their own performance. They carefully plan lessons that meet pupils' needs and, as a result, all groups of pupils are making better progress.

Teachers' marking has improved quickly and it is of a consistent quality throughout the school. Teachers' comments give pupils better guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils respond to teachers' comments and, as a result, they are making better progress in their learning. However, not enough time is given for pupils to gain the most out of teachers' comments, particularly older pupils. Pupils' responses are sometimes rushed and not in sufficient depth to support them to make even more rapid gains in their learning.

The governing body has responded quickly to improve the quality of its development plan. The identification of clear roles and responsibilities means that they are able to check how well senior leaders are doing to improve the quality of teaching and learning promptly. The Chair of the Governing Body demonstrates the same determination to bring about rapid improvements and this determination was evident in discussions with other representatives of the governing body.

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 local authority has acted quickly to support the school to improve its development plan. It has also provided effective support in checking the improvements in the quality of teaching. It has brokered a partnership between three other local schools in similar circumstances to share training and good practice in teaching, and school leadership and management.

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

Yours sincerely

Jan Connor
Her Majesty's Inspector