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5 March 2014

Deborah Gould
Headteacher
Duxford Church of England Community Primary School
St John's Street
Duxford
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CB22 4RA

Dear Mrs Gould

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Duxford Church of England Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 4 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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 December 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:

- revise the termly action plan so that, where possible, the success of initiatives listed can be more easily measured at regular intervals during the term.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you and other senior leaders, eight pupils and six members of the governing body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also conducted a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I evaluated the school development plan. I visited a number of classes, accompanied by you, to speak to pupils and look at their books. There have

been no changes to the school's record of recruitment checks on staff since the previous inspection.

Context

There have been no contextual changes to the school since the previous inspection.

Main findings

The action plan you have produced aims to tackle all of the areas for development identified in the previous inspection, as well as additional issues which you had already identified as part of your drive for school improvement. The plan does not always indicate clearly how you will measure the success of some of your initiatives, or how you will know whether you are on track to meet your targets by your final deadline.

You have worked with all teachers on planning lessons, focusing in particular on providing pupils with opportunities to produce longer pieces of writing. You are starting to identify more examples of such writing through your scheduled monitoring activities. You have dedicated a set time in the week for all pupils to reflect on their teachers' written comments and for pupils to respond to this guidance. My visits to lessons and my discussions with pupils indicate that this initiative is working well.

You have wisely reviewed the structure of your teaching teams and created a basic skills team and a creative curriculum team. As all teachers are expected to be a member of one of these teams, they are developing their practice, as shown through your observations of teaching and learning. Consequently, your current data on pupils' progress indicate improved outcomes for 2014.

You have also taken immediate action to tidy up the outside area for Reception children and showed me architect's plans on how you aim to develop this area for the longer term.

Your monitoring activities, which often include members of the governing body, are recorded well and make useful recommendations on how to secure further improvement. You have recently reviewed pupils' books to monitor the impact of the use of their 'reflective time', visited a number of lessons and reviewed maths books to make sure the evidence you are gathering to inform your judgement on the quality of teaching in the school is robust. These monitoring activities resulted in a number of action points which included reducing the number of worksheets in mathematics and improving the quality of corridor displays.

Members of the governing body have a good understanding of the work of the school because their procedures for monitoring have become more robust and sharply focused on tackling areas of weakness. They demonstrate an accurate

understanding of where gaps in attainment need to be closed. Governors make a good effort to engage with staff, pupils and their parents and carers.

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 adopted a 'light touch' approach to supporting the school. It has provided support in the development of literacy and the practice of the Early Years team. You and the governing body express satisfaction with their level of support. You are also positive about the impact of working within a cluster of other local primary schools and one secondary school, which provides you with many opportunities to share good practice.

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

Yours sincerely

John Daniell
Her Majesty's Inspector