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David Naughton
Headteacher
St Andrew's Catholic Primary School
Windrush Close
Solihull
B92 8QL

Dear Mr Naughton

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Andrew's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 3 July 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 March 2014. 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 last section 5 inspection.

The school should take action to:

- organise an external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved
- sustain the improvements in leadership when new senior leaders join the school in September and continue the robust focus on improving the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, a group of pupils, the Chair and the vice-chair of the Governing Body and

representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. A range of documentation was reviewed including feedback to staff following lesson observations and reviews of pupils' work and the latest information about pupils' achievement. You joined me on brief visits to classrooms to review pupils' learning and talk to pupils. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

Context

Since the previous Section 5 inspection in March 2014, three members of staff have resigned. The governing body has appointed two assistant headteachers, a mathematics subject leader and two newly qualified teachers. These appointments will take effect from 1st September 2014.

Main findings

In a short space of time as headteacher, you have quickly started to lead improvement across the school. You have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Other senior leaders, including governors, share your vision for the school and there is a sense of urgency and a determination to succeed. You have responded effectively and rapidly to most of the issues identified in the last inspection. The previous inspection report identified the need for an external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved. This review is organised for September 2014. I will contact you again in the autumn term 2014 to assess progress in this aspect of the school's work.

You have re-structured the senior leadership team and organised training and support for existing senior leaders and subject leaders. As a result, leaders have a better understanding of their roles and accountabilities. With the support of governors you have re-organised the school timetable to ensure that leaders have sufficient time to fulfil their roles. Nevertheless, you recognise the need to further strengthen leadership. New appointments have been made for September 2014.

You have taken effective actions to ensure that teacher assessment is accurate across the school. Having established a secure baseline for pupils' achievement, you have introduced a new system to track pupils' progress. You are now able to identify the progress of different groups and individual pupils more easily. Senior leaders and subject leaders are beginning to use this information to successfully lead improvements in the subjects and aspects of the school's work for which they are responsible. Pupil progress meetings have taken place and are planned regularly. Teachers are now clear about what is expected of them and how they will be held accountable for pupils' achievement.

You regularly check the quality of teaching and pupils' work. Your feedback identifies successes and areas for development. Your records show that teaching is steadily improving. This is confirmed by your latest assessment information which shows that, across the school, rates of progress are accelerating and more pupils are

working at or above the levels expected for their age. Nevertheless, you recognise that there is still more work to do to further improve the impact of teaching on the achievement of all groups of pupils' in all classes.

The governing body has acted swiftly to strengthen the ways in which it evaluates how well the school is doing and to increase the level of challenge. For example, all governors have attended training to improve their understanding of pupil performance data. They have an accurate understanding of how well pupils' achievement compares with national expectations. Governors have produced a detailed action plan to support further improvement. They regularly meet with other governors in a local network to learn from and share good practice. Nevertheless, governors recognise that they need to be more informed about the school's 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

You have sought support from external consultants to help with planning improvements in English, and further support is planned for the autumn term. Prior to the section 5 inspection in March, you arranged for the local authority to conduct a review of teaching and learning and school leadership. As a result, the local authority increased the level of support offered to the school. This is having a positive impact on the school's improvement journey.

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

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Mottram
Her Majesty's Inspector