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11 September 2014

Jacqueline Ryan
Headteacher
St Augustine's School
Longfellow Drive
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Dear Mrs Ryan

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Augustine's School

Following my visit to your school on 10 September 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 June 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 recent section 5 inspection.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, a group of teachers with management responsibilities, a representative of the local authority, and a discussion was held by telephone with the Chair of Governors to discuss the action taken by the school since the last inspection. I carried out a tour of the school, visiting all classrooms and holding discussions with pupils, and a longer visit to the Early Years Foundation Stage. I looked at a sample of the pupils' workbooks. The school's Post-Ofsted Action Plan was evaluated.

Context

There have been some changes in staffing since the inspection and two new teachers have joined the school. The leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage took up their responsibilities at the beginning of September.

Main findings

You have taken direct action to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching, where they are needed most. You have also provided staff development opportunities that are leading more generally to discussions focussed on how to improve the pupils' learning. The discussions are being assisted by more-focussed monitoring by and feedback from leaders and managers.

You have carried out work to improve the quality of all of the teachers' marking and the presentation of the pupils' work. The examples of the pupils' work that I saw indicate that improvements have been made, but some variations were still apparent. My discussions with the pupils showed that they are not yet always clear about how exactly they will improve their work.

You have focussed usefully on improving the accuracy of the teachers' assessments of the pupils' work. That is starting to increase the level of challenge that the pupils are given in the work they are set.

The biggest improvements were evident in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Better-equipped and more thoughtfully organised classrooms are helping the children to learn better by being more involved in a broader range of more-purposeful activities. You have received positive comments from parents and carers about the improvements.

The roles and responsibilities of different leaders and managers are now much clearer. That has helped the leaders and managers to carry out their responsibilities more effectively, which is leading to improvements in the quality of teaching. The external review of governance has been arranged and was due to commence on the evening of the day I made my visit.

You have started to develop an action plan for further improvements. I discussed with you the strengths of the plan as it is written currently and those aspects of it that were not clear enough to support rapid improvements. In particular, the plan does not include details of the external support that is available and how it is intended to be used.

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

External support from the local authority and has been instrumental, along with other advice and support, in bringing about the improvements made so far. The governing body has been able to draw on the local authority for the external review of governance. You have initiated a partnership with another local school, which will provide you with access to examples of good practice; you are due to complete a detailed action plan this week for the work to be undertaken together. A staff development opportunity involving a visit to an Early Years centre of excellence has assisted with the improvements you have made in that phase.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services Nottinghamshire.

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss

Her Majesty's Inspector