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26 September 2014

Mrs Angela Holleran
Headteacher
All Saints Catholic Primary School
Chesnut Grove
Bootle
Merseyside
L20 4LX

Dear Mrs Holleran

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to All Saints Catholic Primary School, Sefton

Following my visit to your school on 25 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. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

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:

- Sharpen the success criteria and milestones in the action plan so that leaders and governors can check across the year that it is working.
- Ensure governors are informed of evaluations arising from any additional monitoring opportunities provided for middle leaders.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, seven pupils, three representatives of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan and other documents related to school improvement and self-evaluation were evaluated. In addition, the inspector visited every classroom and was accompanied by the head and deputy headteacher. The focus of these visits was to

judge the impact of actions taken to improve the school and to scrutinise work in pupil's books.

Context

A new deputy headteacher has taken up their post following the promotion of the previous postholder. In addition, two assistant headteachers joined the school in September 2014.

Main findings

Senior leaders and governors recognise the importance of further accelerating the current momentum of improvement to ensure the school is judged 'good' at its next inspection. The school's plans for development are well structured and clearly identify the appropriate priorities for improvement. However, success criteria and milestones must be more focussed so that governors can check the plan is working across the year.

Leadership is improving because the governors have taken action to strengthen the senior leadership team. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed from within the existing staff, while two assistant headteachers, both new to the school, bring expertise in special needs and mathematics. This is improving the management of these areas.

Leaders at all levels are developing their effectiveness in how well they check to see that their actions are working. The frequency of monitoring is increasing. Clear timetables for the monitoring of lessons and the scrutiny of work in books are now in place. These identify who is doing what and when they are doing it. They also identify how the focus of the activity is linked to the school's priorities. Consequently senior leaders and governors are developing more detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, leaders recognise the need to share with governors evaluations from middle leaders arising from any additional monitoring.

Teachers' planning of tasks so that the work set for pupils is neither too easy nor too difficult is improving. This is because of leaders' raised expectations. It is also because appropriate training is increasing teachers' skills. The reorganisation of the school day now provides additional time for pupils to be taught phonics (how letters are linked to the sounds they make) in ability sets. This is leading to pupils making faster progress. Additionally, the teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 2 using groups of pupils of similar ability means pupils are now more engaged by the challenges set for them.

Pupils now have increased opportunities to apply their writing skills in a wider range of subjects. This is because subject leaders are increasingly coordinating their plans with each other. Furthermore, some before-school clubs specifically target more

able pupils and help them to stretch their writing skills and mathematical knowledge even further.

Marking is getting better. Teachers have been set higher expectations by leaders through the new marking policy. As a result, pupils are receiving clearer guidance on how to improve their work. The resulting rise in the quality of marking means pupils are now more likely to respond to comments made. The more frequent checks by senior leaders now ensure marking is beginning to be improved in all subjects.

Attendance is continuing to improve. This is because of the actions governors and senior leaders are taking in partnership with the local authority. The redefined role of the learning mentor to be that of the attendance and safeguarding officer and the promotion of the post to be part of the extended senior leadership team demonstrates the commitment of governors to increasing attendance rapidly. The attendance officer now participates in the regular meetings between senior leaders and teachers to discuss the progress pupils make. Consequently, the postholder is well informed to share with parents the impact absence has on their child's achievement. Additional support from the local authority is helping the postholder to increase the challenge on families whose children do not regularly attend school.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspections.

External support

The school's good relationship with the local authority results in effective use of additional support to improve attendance and further development of the quality of teaching and middle leadership.

Good relationships with a local private school provide pupils, particularly girls, access to professional role models and Saturday schools that are intended to raise aspiration and help improve academic achievement. Furthermore, the school's engagement with a local initial teaching education provider is rapidly improving pupils' mathematical calculation skills.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Sefton and as below.

Yours sincerely

John Nixon

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Archdiocese of Liverpool
- Sefton local authority