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Mr David Matthews  
Headteacher  
St Andrew's CofE High School  
Warrington Road  
Croydon  
Surrey  
CR0 4BH

Dear Mr Matthews

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Andrew's CofE High School**

Following my visit to your school on 11 February 2015, 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 September 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. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that the action plan includes precise timescales and milestones so that leaders and governors can check that improvements are happening quickly enough and are leading to better outcomes for students
- check the achievement and progress of all minority and vulnerable groups regularly and share this information with teachers, leaders at all levels and governors, so that any performance gaps can be identified and responded to quickly.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, two other governors and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I reviewed the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation. I looked at evidence of the school's work and reports from external agencies. I joined you on a short tour of the school and spoke informally to students about their work.

## **Context**

There have been a number of staff changes since the last inspection, including within the senior and middle leadership teams. You have successfully recruited new post holders to some of the existing vacancies, but not all. For example, you have been unsuccessful in recruiting science teachers and subject leaders, despite significant efforts to do so. Where leadership vacancies still exist or post holders are absent due to long term sickness, posts are covered by existing staff members on a temporary basis. There are currently seven teachers employed on temporary contracts while permanent appointments are made. You have chosen to leave the school at the end of the summer term and governors are seeking to appoint a new headteacher from September 2015.

## **Main findings**

The school action plan correctly identifies the improvements that need to be made and demonstrates that leaders have a good understanding of priorities. However, you are not always measuring how effective actions have been in raising students' achievement or rates of progress. There are not precise timescales or milestones that will help you to check that actions are happening quickly enough. The plan is not helpful to governors because it does not provide them with sufficient information to effectively challenge and support school leaders.

While assessment information is collected from all teachers on a termly basis, systems for measuring the progress made by minority or vulnerable groups of students are not detailed enough. This makes it difficult for leaders and governors to identify any underachievement or check that interventions for different groups of students have made a difference.

Middle leaders are now ensuring that teachers within their subject areas are marking work regularly and providing students with high quality feedback to respond to. They have developed a range of strategies for doing this, but there is a clear expectation that all teachers should provide high quality feedback to students on a regular basis. You are monitoring the quality of this work carefully and holding middle leaders to account for meeting performance targets and implementing their subject action

plans. As a result of additional training, coaching and mentoring support, middle leaders are able to evaluate the quality of teaching more accurately and check what impact it is having on students' progress. They are more effective because they have been provided with additional time and training to monitor their subjects more closely.

You have provided additional support for inexperienced or developing teachers and have taken assertive action when improvements have not been made. You are confident that despite the problems you have encountered in recruiting high quality staff, teaching standards at the school continue to improve. You are aware that some students in Years 10 and 11 still have gaps in their knowledge and understanding in subjects such as English and science. You are therefore providing them with additional support to help them to catch up as quickly as possible. Some of these interventions are at an early stage and you have yet to measure how effective they have been in raising standards over time.

Governors are supportive of the school and are actively engaged in making the necessary improvements. They have commissioned an external review of governance and a further review to examine how the pupil premium funding is spent. The review of governance is still ongoing and recommendations will not be shared with governors until the end of this term. The review of the pupil premium funding has been completed and provides a clear indication of the improvements that need to be made. These include ensuring that funds are more closely targeted at eligible pupils and that governors receive more detailed assessment information to help them evaluate the impact of the funding. Leaders and governors have fully accepted the recommendations and are starting to address them.

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 school is drawing on a wide range of external support to implement the necessary improvements. This is helping you to check how effective your actions have been. The local authority has arranged regular progress review meetings with leaders and governors. These are targeted visits to look at the different areas for improvement identified within the inspection report. Together with a representative from the diocese, the link advisor from the local authority is monitoring the implementation of the action plan and will evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in raising standards. Further support from other schools has been facilitated by the diocese. This has included providing support for subjects such as science, so that new or inexperienced teachers can provide good quality teaching and learning opportunities. Other professional networking and mentoring initiatives have been developed to share good practice with other schools. This has included using older

students from a local independent school to provide peer mentoring for students studying science at GCSE or A level. A partnership with the Woodard Corporation has been formed and a possible academy sponsorship arrangement for the future is being considered by governors.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Croydon, the Diocese of Southwark and the Education Funding Agency.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Cox  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**