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Mrs Lucy Winkler
Headteacher
Meriden Church of England Primary School
Fillongley Road
Meriden
Coventry
CV7 7LW

Dear Mrs Winkler

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

Following my visit to your school on 21 April 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 October 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:

- build on the work already being done to refine and extend the school's personal, social and health education programme so that pupils have more opportunities to talk about building relationships, recognising and addressing different forms of bullying and how best to manage their own and others' behaviour
- engage more with, and report to, parents so they have a clear understanding of the progress being made towards improving pupils' behaviour.

Evidence

During the inspection, and in addition to touring classes with senior staff, I held meetings with the headteacher, assistant headteacher and teachers responsible for

managing year groups, the early years and aspects of the school's curriculum. I also held meetings with the inclusion manager, a member of staff responsible for working with families, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and a Senior School Improvement Adviser from Solihull Local Authority. I spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day and reviewed the most recent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered recent school surveys of the views of pupils and parents. The school's post-Ofsted action plan and improvement plan were evaluated. I also met with a group of pupils from Key Stage 2 to seek their views about the behaviour and safety of pupils across the school, and spoke to and observed many pupils during break times and at the start of a school assembly.

Context

The Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in February 2015 to replace the Chair who left. The governing body recently appointed a new parent governor and two new foundation governors who represent the Church of England Diocese of Coventry.

Main findings

Leaders have acted promptly to address the areas for improvement highlighted in the full inspection in October 2014. There are well-devised plans in place to adapt and modify the curriculum so that it has a greater impact on improving pupils' personal development and behaviour. These plans are ambitious and wide-ranging, so it is vital that the school implements these fully to maximise their impact on improving pupils' behaviour right across the school.

Most parents and carers are pleased with the school, although as reported at the time of the school's full inspection in October 2014, some believe that leaders and staff should be doing more to deal with bullying. Nonetheless, and since the full inspection, the proportion of parents who still express concerns in the Parent View online survey has reduced significantly, reflecting improvements that leaders, staff and governors have put in place.

Pupils too recognise that their behaviour at break times and lunchtimes has improved. All the pupils spoken to during break time and during a formal group discussion stated in many different ways that they are happy and feel safe. They also say that they know more about recognising and dealing with any form of bullying. The school is planning to incorporate more assemblies, discussions and lessons on topics related to personal development, building relationships and positive behaviour. Many pupils expressed positive views, for example, 'We can talk to our teachers more now about personal things that worry us,' 'We think behaviour is much better now,' 'We do not worry about bullying because we can make friends and our teachers sort things out if we fall out.'

There are good plans in place to engage more with parents and carers, for example, through the use of a parents' forum, workshops and coffee mornings. Some parents say that leaders and governors are not visible enough, although the large majority are pleased with the way the school is led and managed. There is clearly more work to be done to ensure that all parents feel informed and engaged with staff, leaders and governors. A good start has been made as some parents feel that more is being done now to seek parents' views.

The school has some good systems in place to give pupils responsibilities for caring for others and contributing to their school community. Peer mediators, playground buddies and pupil ambassadors act as good role models for younger pupils. Increasingly, pupils are being praised and rewarded for their contribution to helping, respecting and valuing other pupils.

The full inspection, rightly, judged that pupils achieve well and that the teaching is of good quality. There are enough good teachers and practitioners in the school to influence the work of all staff and there is combined willingness to improve pupils' behaviour. Staff morale is high and relationships between pupils and staff are trusting, respectful and positive. Attendance rates remain well above the national average, reflecting how much pupils like coming to school and how supportive parents are in ensuring that pupils attend regularly.

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

External support

The Local Authority's Senior School Improvement Adviser provides the right balance of challenge and support. The Local Authority has put in place good arrangements to support the school and has commissioned an experienced consultant headteacher to work with leaders and governors. This is helping staff to focus on the right priorities and to monitor, track and gauge improvements using clear measures of success that are set out in the school's action plans. The Local Authority has, rightly, given this school more attention prior to and since its full inspection in October 2014, reflecting the authority's ambition to secure sufficiently rapid improvement to pupils' behaviour. Leaders, with the support of the consultant headteacher and Senior Adviser, are now looking to share and see more good practice in other schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou
Her Majesty's Inspector