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20th March 2013

Mrs Kate Lund
Headteacher
St John's CofE Primary School
Sallowbush Road
Huntingdon
PE29 7LA

Dear Mrs Lund

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to St John's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 26 March 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. 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 8 November 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, members of the Governing Body, a representative of the Diocesan Board of Education, and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plans, the headteacher's first report to the governing body and a number of related documents were evaluated.

Context

The new headteacher took up her post on the first of January 2013 and a member of staff was promoted to be the part-time special needs coordinator (Senco). The deputy headteacher's role has been refocused on teaching and learning. The local authority plans to double the size of the school for 1 September 2013; and significant building work is underway and due to complete in the school summer holidays.

Main findings

The 'Actions taken since Ofsted' document provides an effective diary of whole school initiatives appropriately linked to the inspection report. Evidence of improvement is emerging and milestones record the impact already secured. The school is building a detailed assessment data base and the headteacher's report to the governing body provides a clear commentary on the improvements required.

HMI spent some time reading the documentation used by the school and related to the monitoring of teaching. Clear commentaries are provided although a greater focus is required on the quality of learning and the pupils' progress in lessons. HMI led a discussion with the governing body on the new Ofsted Data Dashboard and the supporting detail available in Raise Online, focussing governors' attention on attendance.

A newly qualified teacher was appointed to the Year 6 class in the middle of the autumn term and appropriate support has been provided. However, the school has identified that the progress of these pupils in reading writing and mathematics requires significant improvement prior to the 2013 national tests. HMI discussed with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher what short term actions they might take to address this issue.

Senior leaders and governors are beginning to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to:

- Provide intensive support in the Year 6 class from the most experienced teachers available in order to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics prior to the 2013 standard assessment tests (SATs).
- Review the efficiency of the educational welfare support available to the school.

It is proposed that HMI will lead senior staff in a half day joint-observation exercise in the second half of the summer term 2013.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority helped to bring this experienced headteacher to the schools and has provided effective support from a range of experienced consultants. As a result, the school's focus on the quality of provision and the need to document the impact of action taken has become more efficient. The governing body noted that the local

authority educational welfare support has failed to take robust action with the parents of children who have a track record of persistent absence.

It will be important that the local authority, the governing body and Diocesan Board of Education support the smooth expansion of this school as building work nears completion.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Cambridgeshire Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education, Diocese of Ely.

Yours sincerely

David Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority
- the academy chain where relevant
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- The lead inspector.