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30 November 2012

Mary Grist
Headteacher
Whaplode Church of England Primary School
Mill Lane
Whaplode
Spalding
PE12 6TS

Dear Mrs Grist

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Whaplode Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 29 November 2012, 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 October 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan and records of monitoring and performance management information were evaluated. A short visit was made to each classroom.

Context

There have been no changes to the context of the school since the last section 5 inspection.

Main findings

The headteacher is providing an effective steer to school improvement work. There is an improvement plan in place which identifies appropriate actions. It has clear targets which in most cases are easy to measure, alongside points to check how well plans are working. Plans are being put into place quickly. Suitable training and support has been provided for teachers and teaching assistants to improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly to make sure that all pupils are challenged to do as well as they can. More regular checks are being made to see if this is happening. At present these are most often done by the headteacher. The headteacher holds meetings with teachers so they can explain how they are making sure pupils do as well as they should. There is a system for checking on how well pupils are making progress across the school. The headteacher acknowledges that not all of this information may be as accurate as it should be.

The governing body have set up a steering group to focus on the progress being made. It has also worked to improve how it holds school leaders to account for the success of the school's work. Members of the governing body acknowledge that the programme of governor visits to school is not focused well enough on the key areas identified for improvement. Training is being planned so that governors know how to make the best use of the information given to them.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- ensure that all assessment information is accurate
- develop the leadership roles and responsibilities of leaders other than the headteacher
- make sure the programme of visits to school for members of the governing body is closely focused on the key issues identified for improvement.

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

External support

The headteacher has responded positively to the range of support offered by the local authority. She has particularly valued the 'Strengthening Leadership Programme' in which she has worked closely with a consultant headteacher to strengthen systems to drive improvement. She is also collaborating with other local schools to strengthen monitoring and evaluation. A consultant has worked with staff to improve the teaching of mathematics. A training plan is being set up for the governing body.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Lincolnshire.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey
Her Majesty's Inspector