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10 December 2012

Mrs J FitzGerald
Headteacher
St Clement's CE Primary
Abbey Hey Lane
Higher Openshaw
Manchester
M11 1LR

Dear Mrs FitzGerald

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to St Clement's CE Primary

Following my visit to your school on 7 December 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 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and two senior leaders; three governors including the Chair of the Governing Body; a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils. The school improvement plan was evaluated; records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, performance management procedures and minutes of governing body meetings were scrutinised, as were the summer and autumn term reports from the school's improvement partners.

Context

There have been no changes to the school's circumstances or staffing since its inspection in October 2012.

Main findings

The leadership team has used the recommendations from the Ofsted inspection as a key driver for setting targets in the school's improvement plan and teacher performance management. There is a clear understanding that it is a matter of urgency that pupils' rates of progress start to accelerate in Key Stage 2, particularly in years 3 to 5. The school's detailed tracking system that records pupils' progress over time is becoming more useful as teachers work together to improve their skills to assess more accurately pupils' levels of work. The school is aware of the need to develop its staff appraisal systems in line with the national recommendations and the expected Teachers' Standards. These standards have not yet been discussed in depth with all staff and leaders in order to match particular levels of expectation with salary scales and increase the rigour with which all teaching is challenged to be good or better.

Senior leaders and the governing body are considering a range of options for the deployment of staff and resources to support the drive for improvement. These include making the most effective use of additional funding to bring in extra teaching expertise. The school knows it will need to demonstrate that any planned actions have a positive impact on pupils' rates of learning, especially for those who have gaps in their basic skills.

Teaching across the school is regularly monitored by leaders through lesson observations and other checks, such as scrutinising teachers' planning. Strengths and areas for development are identified and teachers are given feedback on these. Although evaluations of teaching are detailed, these do not always clearly specify to teachers exactly what they must do to improve pupils' learning to good or better. Meetings are held with teachers to discuss the progress made by their pupils. It would be beneficial if these were planned more rigorously to ensure that a wider range of evidence is taken into account; for example a scrutiny of assessed samples of pupils' work, observations of the quality of their learning in lessons, and discussions with pupils.

The governing body is responding well to the recommendations of the inspection report and is determined to play a full part in monitoring the school's progress. Governors understand the importance of having clear and concise information from leaders about how weaker teaching is being tackled and challenged. They are in the process of restructuring governing body committees and are keen that a new teaching and learning committee receives detailed information that will then be summarised for full governing body meetings. Governors have been involved in reviewing the school's improvement planning procedures. They agree that action plans could be more succinct so that progress against key objectives can be effectively measured at key points in time, through clear milestones. Leaders and governors also acknowledge that the success criteria by which the school's actions are judged should always focus on evidence of their impact on pupils' achievements.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take 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:

- use the Ofsted documents 'Moving English Forward' and 'Mathematics Made to Measure' to support the school's drive to raise expectations and improve the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects
- revisit the school's action plans to ensure that there is a succinct overview of key priorities across the school with clear milestones identified for the checking of progress towards targets.

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

External support

The local authority is monitoring the school's performance appropriately given that St Clement's has been judged satisfactory overall in its last two inspections. Partnership working is developing well with a local outstanding school as part of the Manchester Urban Schools Alliance.

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

Yours sincerely

Marguerite Murphy

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.