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Glyn Rushton
Headteacher
The Spalding Parish Church of England Day School
Clay Lake
Spalding
PE11 2QG

Dear Mr Rushton

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

Following my visit to your school on 3 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, other senior leaders, the Chair and two other members of the governing body. A discussion was held with a senior educational adviser from the local authority. The school action plan and current assessment data were evaluated. A learning walk was taken which incorporated all classes within school.

Context

There have been some contextual changes within the school since the section 5 inspection which judged the school to require improvement. A new class teacher for Year 6 pupils started working at the school after October half term and there are two recent appointments to the governing body to fill vacancies. There is a new outdoor area for children working within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school has increasing numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language and who continue to join the school throughout the academic year.

Main findings

Work being undertaken to improve the school is suitable and well prioritised. Leaders ensure there is effective teamwork and increasingly greater consistency in the way teachers work across the school. Everyone, including members of the governing body, is showing determination to strengthen the school's performance so that the education which each pupil receives is as good as it can be. There is now a good level of training and support in place for all staff, linked to higher expectations of their performance in raising standards, particularly in mathematics. There are now more planned opportunities for pupils to work independently and work things out for themselves. Teachers' marking is improving generally, but is less helpful in pupils' mathematics books. These changes are being closely checked by senior staff with teachers receiving clear feedback about their work. Teachers are increasingly held responsible for the progress made by all pupils in their class. They have higher expectations of more able pupils and are meeting their needs increasingly well.

School staff and governors have worked well together to set rigorous performance targets for teachers and subject or phase leaders. There are now specific checks in place to determine whether everyone is on course to achieve the personal and school targets which have been set. Governors have supported the school in strengthening the school's leadership. They are clear about the school's priorities for improvement and where weaknesses in teaching remain. However, governors remain overly reliant on information provided by senior leaders in forming their views about the school's progress. They are not sufficiently proactive in their methods of checking and evaluating the school and its resources.

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:

- Develop pupils' use of mathematical vocabulary, including for those pupils who are in the early stages of learning English
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking in mathematics, ensuring that pupils receive helpful advice for improvement
- Ensure that the governing body have the skills and expertise to fully evaluate the work of the school and use a broad range of evidence from which to check on the progress being made, including gathering and evaluating the views of all key stakeholders.

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

External support

The school is drawing well on external support provided by the local authority. There has been a specific focus on developing the quality of teaching and subject and

phase leaders to coach others. They have also assisted with developing boys' interest in writing and the use of media and technology to boost literacy. Developing quality within the Early Years Foundation Stage is on-going and has already made an impact to the quality of the learning environment and the improved systems to record children's achievement and progress. This is all having a positive impact on securing the necessary improvements within the school. The school recognises the necessity to continue to access further support with developing mathematics teaching.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, The Head of Service for South Holland District and the Diocesan Director responsible for the school.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector