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25 November 2010

Mrs Lara Furmidge and Mrs Geeta Verrell
Crockerne Church of England Primary School
Westward Drive
Pill
Bristol BS20 0JP

Dear Mrs Furmidge and Mrs Verrell

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Crockerne Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 and 17 November, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2009. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

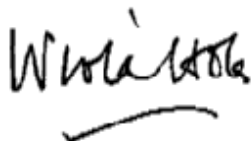
Progress since being subject to special measures – good

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Director of Children's Services for North Somerset and the Director of Education for the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wiola Hola".

Wiola Hola
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2009

- Ensure that teaching is closely matched to all pupils' needs in Years 2 to 6 in order to accelerate their progress, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - using ongoing assessment to pitch tasks at the right level of challenge for different groups of pupils and to respond to pupils' needs in whole-class sessions
 - providing all pupils with clear feedback on what they are doing well and guidance on how to improve their performance.

- Make sure that the curriculum promotes effective progress by:
 - consistently building pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills from year to year and within each year
 - providing good opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their skills in writing and mathematics across different subjects.

- Drive improvement and embed ambition by:
 - rigorously evaluating the impact of provision, particularly teaching, on pupils' progress and attainment and taking swift action for improvement
 - holding all teachers accountable for the quality of learning in their classes.

Special measures: monitoring of Crockerne Church of England Primary School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 16 and 17 November 2010

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, including 12 lessons or parts of lessons, scrutinised documents and pupils' written work, and met with the two co-headteachers, the deputy headteacher and other senior staff, two groups of staff and three members of the governing body. She had a telephone conversation with the School Improvement Partner and another with the headteacher of a local junior school. The inspector talked with pupils in lessons, at break times, and briefly in the breakfast club.

Context

The number on roll is 305, including 54 children in the nursery, some of whom attend part-time. Since the last monitoring visit, the school has created two new classes. There are now three classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and nine classes in Years 1 to 6. Five class teachers joined the school in September 2010 and four left at the end of the summer term. A co-headship arrangement has been set up for the current academic year with two headteachers, one of whom is new to the school, each working for three days a week. The Children's Centre is not being looked at as part of these monitoring visits.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

Further rises in pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics are clearly visible. These are underpinned by marked improvements in both educational provision and in leadership and management. Pupils' progress is satisfactory and good in places, for example in reading. It is generally satisfactory in writing and mathematics. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress.

Results in 2010 at the end of Year 6 and Year 2 tests show improvements from those in 2009 in most respects. Attainment is broadly average but a lower-than-average proportion of pupils in Year 6 exceeded expected levels in the 2010 tests. In Year 2, the proportion exceeding expected levels in writing was lower than average in 2010. The 2010 results show that pupils leaving Year 6 made good progress from their starting points in Year 3. What is not entirely clear is whether those starting points reflected at least satisfactory progress over Years 1 to 3. The school has correctly identified the need to speed up progress in writing and in mathematics, especially for more-able pupils.



The unevenness in pupils' progress between classes and year groups seen at the two previous monitoring visits has been largely eliminated. In particular, there are no longer concerns about the progress of pupils in Years 3 and 4. Progress in lessons seen was predominantly satisfactory or good and this is an improvement since the previous visit in June this year. The quality, quantity and presentation of pupils' written work continue to improve because teachers' high expectations, target setting and marking are supporting this. Numerical targets are mostly challenging and short-term curricular ones are generally appropriate. Pupils understand their targets but these are not always given with start or completion dates. Learning diaries for children and younger pupils are kept well to show progress but entries are not always dated. There are still gaps in mental arithmetic skills for some pupils and the school is correctly seeking to fill these. Pupils' attainment and progress in subjects other than English and mathematics are still unclear. Work in pupils' books shows that subjects other than English and mathematics are covered but rather thinly in places. Progression in these subjects is not easy to discern from year to year, although 'skills ladders' are being introduced to support teachers in tracking pupils' progress.

Other relevant outcomes for pupils

Pupils continue to enjoy working and playing in this orderly school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school was never less than good during the visit. Pupils are friendly and polite. They are happy to talk about their work and how it can be improved. They eagerly point out interesting features, such as the chicken run. Pupils work with much interest and enthusiasm. A striking improvement is in the extent to which pupils rise to challenges presented. Tasks set are sometimes very demanding but pupils tackle them resiliently. Attendance is currently 95% and approaching the school's target of 96%.

The effectiveness of provision

Teaching is stronger than in the past because teachers have developed further their confidence and skills, especially in the use of assessment information and in marking, and raised again their expectations of pupils' achievements. The quality of teaching is predominantly satisfactory or good. There are no endemic weaknesses in it. Some teaching, but not all, is very effective in identifying which pupils have or have not grasped skills or concepts through good use of questioning or other means. An increased range of teaching and learning styles was observed on this visit, including use of drama, problem solving and exploring. Teachers maintain good order and pace. Relationships with pupils are very good. Pupils praise their teachers for making lessons interesting and fun. Good partnerships exist between teachers and teaching assistants. Teaching assistants play a vital part in much of the effective provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in intervention groups, as well as supporting whole-class teaching. Some teachers are particularly effective in modelling good handwriting. Lesson planning is good, although work in literacy and numeracy is still not linked securely and routinely to work in other areas.



Good curriculum plans have been drawn up with a view to improving the curriculum. They are not yet entirely complete. The plans are beginning to be used but their effectiveness to support teaching and learning in all subjects has not been evaluated. Given the new curriculum plans, staff have to work hard to familiarise themselves with them, gather materials and implement them. The previously reported problems with resources for information and communication technology have been resolved and pupils speak of more regular use of them. Strategies to improve girls' progress in mathematics are being trialled in a 'girls only' mathematics group. Some singing takes place but provision for music is currently rather limited. Pupils enjoy greatly the good range of clubs. They and staff speak of the much enjoyed and highly regarded recent school production of *Bugsy Malone*. The curriculum has strengths in the way in which it supports pupils' personal development.

Judgement

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure that teaching is closely matched to all pupils' needs in Years 2 to 6 in order to accelerate their progress, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - using ongoing assessment to pitch tasks at the right level of challenge for different groups of pupils and to respond to pupils' needs in whole-class sessions
 - providing all pupils with clear feedback on what they are doing well and guidance on how to improve their performance.

Good progress

- Make sure that the curriculum promotes effective progress by:
 - consistently building pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills from year to year and within each year
 - providing good opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their skills in writing and mathematics across different subjects.

Good progress

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Many positive actions have been taken to strengthen leadership and management at all levels. Governance has improved greatly. The governing body has engaged in a thorough review of its work and adjusted its ways of working to keep a much closer check on the school's work and effectiveness. The new chair of the governing body has given much impetus to this activity. Members of the governing body have set out clearly the co-headteachers' roles and responsibilities. They have also set out clear expectations of what the headteachers' reports to the governing body are to cover, including key indicators of the school's performance. The reports are much improved. The co-headship arrangements are working well. The quality of teaching is rightly a



key area of focus for the headteachers and they keep a close check on it. New staff have been speedily inducted into the school's work and they feel welcome and supported. Staff attendance has improved. The single central record of checks on adults working with pupils is kept as required.

Systems for compiling and analysing data on pupils' attainment and progress have been greatly enhanced. There is still a need to check that all data used are entirely reliable in order for evaluations of progress to be accurate. The school is now in a reasonably secure position to judge swiftly the progress of sub-groups of pupils as well as of individuals. Communications with staff and parents and carers have improved, although many documents are not dated. Educational provision is being developed and managed by senior and other staff working in curriculum teams. This is a new structure and staff are in the process of establishing fully how they are to function within it. Staff morale is high. Staff are seeking to improve their effectiveness and know what needs to be done. The school improvement plan is a clear and useful document. It is realistic as well as ambitious. Some good work has been undertaken to evaluate the impact of actions already taken but the evaluations are not always sufficiently well focused on outcomes for pupils. Position statements have been written for each subject area. The statements cover educational provision but give too little information about pupils' attainment and progress and what outcomes for pupils are in need of improvement. The school's finances are tightly managed, with little room for manoeuvre. Resources for learning are just adequate. Classrooms are inviting because staff have worked well to make them so. Some parts of the school are drab and in need of redecoration.

Judgement

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Drive improvement and embed ambition by:
 - rigorously evaluating the impact of provision, particularly teaching, on pupils' progress and attainment and taking swift action for improvement
 - holding all teachers accountable for the quality of learning in their classes.

Good progress

External support

The school is no longer reliant on the same level of external support as before. The Grove Junior School has previously provided valuable support and this is expected to come to an end shortly. Senior staff appreciate greatly the support, advice and challenge from the School Improvement Partner, who is also an adviser from the local authority. The local authority recently conducted a review of the school's progress. This was thorough, supportive, accurate and encouraging.

Priorities for further improvement

No further priorities are being given after this third monitoring inspection.

