

## PROTECT-INSPECTION

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Headteacher  
Hesketh-with-Becconsall All Saints CE School  
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Dear Mr Smye-Rumsby

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Hesketh-with-Becconsall All Saints CE School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 19 October 2011 for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

Since the previous inspection one teacher has left and one teacher has been appointed on a one year contract.

As a result of the inspection on 13 July 2010, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made good progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Following the inspection the local authority offered support to the school which was readily taken up. Specialist School Improvement Advisers, consultants and the school's own adviser have all worked with the school's leaders and teachers in a variety of ways.

The quality of teaching is improving but it is not yet consistently good across Years 1 to 6. Teachers have had training in levelling writing and are now more confident in doing so. They are using an agreed planning format and are making explicit the steps pupils should take to succeed in their tasks. There is variation in the skill that teachers bring to their planning. The new marking policy ensures that pupils receive appropriate written feedback on their work including praise and guidance on how to improve. Teachers are now planning specific times for pupils to follow up the advice given. Work in lessons is generally well contextualised. Pupils are attentive, interested, and keen to answer questions. They tackle the work set conscientiously, and work well independently or collaboratively. Pupils in Year 3 were observed working very productively on a written report about a wetlands wildlife centre they had visited. Pupils in Year 6 engaged well in a role play about youth

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unemployment. Pupils are beginning to be more involved in assessing their own work, using a traffic light system. In the lessons visited there were instances of highly effective interventions by teachers and teaching assistants, identifying specific aspects of work that could be improved. However, there were also examples where interventions were less effective. Teacher explanations are generally clear. The pace in lessons varies and some time was lost while pupils waited for things to be given out, or because a lesson finished early. After a strong emphasis on writing last year, this year the school is developing the teaching of mathematics with the help of a consultant.

The result of all the work done is that outcomes are improving, especially in Key Stage 2. Unvalidated data indicate that levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2011 were above average. These pupils made the expected progress during Key Stage 2. The percentage of pupils gaining at least the expected level in English and mathematics increased significantly. The proportion reaching the higher Level 5 in both English and mathematics increased to about one third, whereas no pupils achieved this in 2010. The overall data do mask a difference in the performance of boys and girls. Girls, who had underachieved in the past, did better than boys in 2011. However, when prior attainment is considered, both boys and girls made similar progress. Standards in writing continue to be lower than in reading and mathematics.

At Key Stage 1, outcomes in 2011 were also better than in 2010. However, although the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in writing was above average, the proportion reaching the expected Level 2 was below average.

Pupils' progress is now assessed regularly and the data recorded on a progress tracking system. This assessment data are encouraging and suggest that rates of progress are accelerating and the improving trends in Key Stage 2 outcomes will continue in 2012. Termly formal assessments are ensuring that underachievement is identified, and interventions are planned. Senior leaders are monitoring this data carefully. Teachers' performance management is now more clearly focused on pupil outcomes.

Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work have been strengthened. Schedules for observations and work scrutiny have been formalised. Subject leaders' roles have been clarified. Improvement plans include explicit targets and deadlines. Members of the governing body have received training from the local authority, for example, in interpreting data. They are putting this to good use, challenging school leaders appropriately and holding them to account.

The school has begun to develop a link with another school in the county with pupils from different faiths, cultures and backgrounds but this has not yet extended to pupils meeting or exchanging information. Nevertheless, the curriculum includes coverage of different faiths and pupils who met the inspector could recall learning about these. International links remain strong.

The local authority has provided very good support to the school, through training, coaching, advice and specific tools such as the progress tracking system. Following the much improved results in 2011, this support is now being withdrawn. School leaders are confident of their ability to continue the improvements, but the recent resignation of the deputy headteacher does present a potential risk.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ruth James  
Her Majesty's Inspector

## Annex

### The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in July 2010

- Accelerate progress and raise attainment by the end of Key Stage 2, especially in writing and particularly for girls, by summer 2011 by:
  - improving the quality and consistency of teaching in Years 1 to 6
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to take an active part in their learning
  - ensuring that work is always sufficiently challenging and matched closely to pupils' individual needs
  - giving regular, high-quality written feedback to pupils so that all are aware of the levels at which they are working and what they need to do to improve further.
  
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that monitoring and evaluation are regular and rigorous
  - using information from evaluation to produce high-quality improvement planning, clearly linked to outcomes for pupils
  - ensuring that governors are fully and systematically involved in evaluating the school's work.
  
- Strengthen pupils' cultural development by increasing their awareness of faiths and cultures other than their own, with particular reference to faith communities within the United Kingdom.