

## PROTECT-INSPECTION



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Mr S Cox  
Headteacher  
St Augustine's CofE (Voluntary Aided) Junior School  
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Peterborough  
PE2 9DH

Dear Mr Cox

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of St Augustine's CofE (Voluntary Aided) Junior School**

Following my visit with Fatiha Maitland, Additional Inspector, to your school on 3–4 July 2012, 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in February 2012. 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 – satisfactory

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed by the school.

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 the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Peterborough and the Diocesan Director of Education.

Yours sincerely

Chris Moodie  
**Additional Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2012.**

- Increase the rate of progress and raise attainment, particularly in writing, and especially that of boys and all pupils who find learning difficult by January 2013, by:
  - ensuring pupils are helped to respond to feedback about their work
  - increasing pupils' independence in learning and determination to consistently meet their targets.
  
- Improve the majority of teaching to good or better by January 2013, by:
  - ensuring each session has a sharply focused objective that moves the learning of all groups of pupils forward
  - ensuring that teachers check on the progress of all groups of pupils, particularly the less able, including those supported by teaching assistants
  - ensuring that the approach to teaching of phonics (linking letters to sounds) is consistent across the school.
  
- Strengthen the capacity of leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by:
  - rapidly improving the use of data at all levels across the school, so that incisive analysis of the progress of groups of pupils is used to ensure that support strategies for pupils are effective.

## **Special measures: monitoring of St Augustine's CofE (Voluntary Aided) Junior School**

### **Report from the first monitoring inspection on 3–4 July 2012**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, analysed the school's assessment data and met with the headteacher, members of the school's leadership team, class teachers, members of the governing body, representatives from the local authority and groups of pupils.

#### **Context**

Changes have been made to the school's leadership team since the inspection in February 2012. Teaching in Year 4 has been stabilised following the return of one permanent member of staff.

#### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Attainment in writing has improved across the school since the recent inspection. This improvement in writing is uneven and pupils' attainment in Years 4 and 5 remains below their national counterparts. Attainment in writing remains weaker than in reading and mathematics for all year groups. Evidence from lessons and in pupils' books indicates that pupils are now writing on a more regular and structured basis. The school has successfully addressed the underachievement of the majority of boys through targeted intervention and a more strategic use of teaching assistants. Boys' achievement remains inadequate in mathematics in Year 4. Girls' achievement is at least satisfactory, and sometimes better, in all year groups other than in Year 4, where progress has been slower.

A review of the school's strategies for addressing the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has made a positive impact on their achievement. This group of pupils are now achieving in line with their national counterparts in all year groups except Year 4, where there are clear signs of improvement. The deployment of teaching assistants has improved in this area of the school's work.

Pupils currently in Year 6 have achieved above national averages in both reading and mathematics this year. Attainment in writing is average for boys but is slightly better for girls. This represents an improvement on achievement in recent years. Pupils in this year group have made good progress as a result of a committed drive to improve outcomes during the final year. In lessons, many pupils in Year 6 show positive attitudes to their learning, and are motivated to continue working hard in secondary school.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection

- Increase the rate of progress and raise attainment, particularly in writing, and especially that of boys and all pupils who find learning difficult by January 2013 – satisfactory

### **The quality of teaching**

The majority of teaching in the school is at least satisfactory and progress has been made to secure good teaching in many lessons. A small amount of teaching remains inadequate.

The majority of lessons have structured planning which gives a clear idea of exactly what the pupils are to learn. Where this is most effective, pupils are able to explain what they need to do in order to improve. The use of learning objectives is now consistent across the school, and pupils are accustomed to referring to them. Many say that they are useful and help them to focus on what they need to do.

Pupils receive feedback about their work on a consistent basis. The quality of the written feedback is variable but none is less than satisfactory. There is some exemplary marking in the school, and, where it is happening, pupils have a very clear understanding of what to do in order to improve. In addition, pupils in these classes are able to respond to the teachers' feedback. They actively self-assess their work and help their peers to understand how to improve. In a number of classes, teachers use target sheets to develop pupils' understanding of how consistently making small improvements can lead to strong progress. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils' use of these target sheets has contributed to good progress in writing. In talking to pupils from different classes, inspectors found a marked difference between pupils' levels of awareness of their own targets: pupils in classes where marking and feedback are not of a high quality are much less clear about how to improve, and are not aware of their own targets or goals.

The support that is provided by teaching assistants has improved. In the majority of cases, teaching assistants are now providing opportunities for pupils to learn more independently. This means that some teaching assistants are now more mobile in lessons, and are making effective decisions about when to intervene and provide support for pupils, and when to allow them to use their own strategies. Where this is being most effective, pupils are responding well and enjoy the opportunities to work on their own and then proudly show the outcomes after a few minutes of independence. In a small number of lessons, teaching assistants are too passive, listen to the teachers for too long and remain with pupils for lengthy periods of time. As a result, they deny pupils the opportunities independently to practise and

reinforce learning or develop their capacity for self-assessment, without adult support.

Some lessons are carefully planned to meet the needs of all learners. However, on too many occasions all pupils are required to do the same work. This approach does not maximise the learning of the different ability groups in the class. The beginnings of lessons are often too long, and all pupils are routinely asked to listen to the same introductions to lessons regardless of prior learning. Consequently, higher ability pupils, who already understand the concept being explained, regularly lose learning time. In a similar way, pupils who need additional support listen to an introduction which is too difficult for them and have to wait until afterwards for support at their level (usually) from a teaching assistant. Poor behaviour, a feature of a small number of lessons, often begins in the introduction of the lesson. Where pupils' differing needs are catered for from the beginning of the lesson, as seen in a Year 5 mathematics lesson where the fast pace of the teaching moved learning on quickly, pupils are focused on their learning.

When pupils are working independently, some teachers make very good use of their time by targeting groups of pupils and setting them challenges, revisiting shortly afterwards to check on their progress. Where teaching is less effective, too much time is spent maintaining pupils' focus. In one class, for example, the overall noise levels are often too high and pupils and teachers find it difficult to concentrate. In another class, a very small number of pupils present challenge and take up too much teaching time. Teaching assistants, trying to deal with this, are reluctant to apply the behaviour policy and resort to accepting the defiance.

The teaching of reading through phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) has improved because teaching assistants are now targeting the pupils with the most needs with systematic, regular support. They are making good use of recent training and pupils in these groups are making better progress. All pupils are yet to receive such improved provision because this training has not yet been undertaken by all teachers.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection

- Improve the majority of teaching to good or better by January 2013 – satisfactory

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Attitudes to learning across the school are largely positive. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and listen well, responding to their teachers' requests quickly. In contrast, a small number of pupils have poor attitudes to their learning and seek to distract other pupils. The impact of this behaviour on learning is significant in some lessons, where the progress of the class is slowed because too much of the teacher's time is

occupied and valuable teaching time is lost. The school's revised behaviour policy is beginning to address this issue where it is used consistently. In such classrooms, disruptions to learning are rare and pupils make accelerated progress.

Pupils feel safe in school and report that the rare instances of bullying are effectively dealt with by teachers. The school's positive and nurturing ethos is a strength of its work. Procedures to safeguard pupils meet statutory requirements.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

School leaders have effectively revised the way that assessment information is collated and presented. As a result, all teachers have access to clear assessment data and understand the information that it contains. Opportunities for teachers to develop their assessment skills have been provided and this has led to enhanced consistency and accuracy. Class teachers now talk with confidence about the progress that groups of pupils have made and where they need to maintain a focus in the future. This means that effective strategies for pupils in need of further support are now being set up. Members of the governing body have also been involved in this area of improvement, and demonstrate a clear understanding of the progress made so far, and what else needs to be achieved. Governors have worked alongside the local authority to develop analytical skills which equip them to challenge the school's performance as well as to support it.

The organisation of the leadership team has altered recently. All leaders are aware of where teaching needs to improve and plans are in place to bring this improvement about. Staffing deployment is about to alter to accommodate the change to mixed-age range from September 2012. Along with senior leaders, the upper and lower key stage team leaders are aware of the benefits and challenges that this kind of class arrangement can bring. Meeting the needs of the different groups of pupils within each class is a key focus for the school's ongoing self-evaluation during the autumn term. Currently, middle leaders do not have sufficient time regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching in their teams.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection

- Strengthen the capacity of leadership and management at all levels, including governance – satisfactory

### **External support**

The local authority's statement of action fulfils requirements. A variety of strategies have been employed to support the school. These have been a contributory factor in the school's improvement since being judged as requiring special measures. Support

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with data management and training for the teaching of phonics are two examples of successful intervention. In addition, joint lesson observations and work scrutinies have provided valuable moderation of the evaluations that the school's leaders have made. The local authority has worked effectively with the governing body to enhance their skills and understanding surrounding school self-assessment and, very specifically, the use of data. Future plans to provide teachers with examples of good practice are in place.