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14 September 2012

Miss Beverley Grime  
Carleton St Hilda's Church of England Primary School  
Bispham Road  
Carleton,  
Poulton-le-Fylde  
Lancashire  
FY6 7PE

Dear Miss Grime

**Special measures monitoring inspection of Carleton St Hilda's Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit with Chris Griffin, additional inspector, to your school on 12-13 September, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 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.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published 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 Lancashire local authority.

Yours sincerely

Jean Kendall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2012

- Rapidly improve the impact of leaders' actions on improving the quality of education provided, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
  - reviewing the delegation of senior and middle leaders' roles and responsibilities
  - increasing the rigour of leaders' monitoring and evaluation procedures
  - ensuring the governing body provides sufficient challenge to school leaders
  - providing better and more accurate reporting from senior leaders and the local authority to the governing body
  - raising the bar for the setting of targets for pupils' attainment to ensure that all groups of pupils are expected to make good progress
  - reviewing the school's policy to secure more effective teaching and learning
  - providing staff training in leadership skills.
  
- Eradicate all inadequate teaching and improve satisfactory teaching to good, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
  - improving the quality of teachers' planning to identify the skills and knowledge to be learned by pupils
  - improving the use of assessment information to ensure lesson plans take full account of pupils' starting points
  - ensuring whole school consistency in implementing the school's approach to teaching
  - providing staff training that is matched to the improvements needed in the quality of teaching
  - ensuring teaching is always brisk and that regular checks are made on pupils' progress in lessons
  - improving the marking of pupils' work so that feedback informs pupils about how to improve.
  
- Improve pupils' academic outcomes and achievement, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
  - ensuring greater challenge in lessons especially for higher attaining pupils
  - improving the teaching and marking of writing
  - ensuring a greater consistency of good quality teaching throughout the school
  - increasing expectations of the progress made by girls.

## **Report on the first monitoring inspection on 12-13 September 2012**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, the associate headteacher, staff, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.

### **Context**

Since the last inspection, an assistant headteacher has been seconded to the school and is currently teaching the Year 5 class, where the regular teacher is absent. A supply teacher is supporting teaching in the Reception class and another is supporting group learning in Year 6. An associate headteacher is working alongside the headteacher and other leaders for two days a week to develop leadership. A new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in June 2012.

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

Pupils' attainment in standardised tests improved in 2012. The pupils in Year 6 achieved above average standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, with many more achieving the higher level 5. All pupils made the expected two levels of progress across Key Stage 2 and some made better than expected progress. Pupils in Year 2 achieved above average standards of attainment in mathematics and reading and they did better in writing than previous cohorts. However, the proportion reaching higher levels in Year 2, particularly in writing, is still below expectations, given pupils' well developed skills on entry to the school.

School leaders are rightly pleased with the positive results in 2012, but they recognise that there is more to be done to ensure pupils make good progress across the whole school. Most children enter the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are at least in line with, and often above, expectations for their age. Many have well developed social and language skills. However, assessment is not used well enough to plan interesting activities that extend children's learning from the start. Consequently, children do not make the progress they could in the Reception class, nor are they adequately prepared for the next phase of their education when they move into Year 1.

Pupils' progress across the rest of the school is variable. Although pupils make expected progress overall, the pace of learning is still too slow in some lessons, particularly for higher ability pupils. The pace of learning slows at the start of the school year, because activities are not sufficiently challenging to build on pupils' prior knowledge and skills. Appropriate actions are being taken to address issues, including the introduction of a rigorous system to track pupils' progress and improve transition from year to year. Regular meetings to discuss pupils' progress are ensuring that appropriately challenging targets are set and support is provided for

any pupils who are under achieving. Pupils in Year 6 are receiving targeted support from an additional teacher to accelerate their rate of learning.

### **The quality of teaching**

Leaders are working closely with the local authority to tackle inadequacies and improve teaching to good. Staff have received a broad menu of good quality professional development and support from the local authority, focused on improving teaching and assessment. Appropriate, intensive support is in place where inadequacies have been identified. Lesson planning, marking and assessment are showing signs of improvement, providing a firm foundation on which to secure further improvement. Marking gives pupils appropriate guidance on how they can improve their work and pupils are aware of their learning targets. Structured phonics and more explicit teaching of reading and writing have been introduced across the whole school but are at very early stages of implementation.

Constructive and encouraging relationships are strengths in most lessons. Pupils are keen to learn and highly motivated when activities interest them. Where teaching is at its best, the teacher provides clear explanation, gives pupils time to work independently, constantly checks pupils' understanding and adapts teaching as the lesson progresses. However, teachers are not yet demonstrating consistently effective teaching strategies based on secure assessment. There is still some inadequate teaching and much that is not yet good. In less effective lessons, the pace of learning slows because the teacher talks for too long and explanations lack clarity. Pupils feel frustrated because they have little opportunity to engage in active learning or to complete more challenging tasks. Activities are bland or are not at a sufficiently challenging level to extend their learning. Reading skills, including phonics, have not been taught explicitly or rapidly enough in the Reception class.

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

Pupils behave with courtesy and consideration towards each other around the school. They are highly motivated learners, showing application and perseverance where teaching captures their imagination. However, they become fidgety and lose concentration where they are made to listen for too long or tasks do not provide sufficient challenge. Pupils in Key Stage 2 display a better attitude to learning than those in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 because activities are better matched to their interests and abilities. Pupils feel safe and have confidence in teachers to maintain good order and deal with any inappropriate behaviour should it occur.

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

Leaders have taken appropriate steps to increase the rigour of monitoring and evaluation procedures, with support from the associate headteacher and associate

assistant headteacher. Roles and responsibilities have been reviewed and new job descriptions agreed, setting out appropriate responsibilities for post holders. Senior leaders' responsibilities in assessing and developing the performance of staff have been clarified and appropriate performance management targets have been set for all staff. The headteacher now has an accurate overview of the school's performance informed by lesson observations, work sampling, assessment moderation and data analysis. The monitoring and evaluation cycle has only recently been introduced so impact is limited at this stage. However, key systems are in place; leaders are clear about what needs to improve and have identified appropriate actions to improve teaching and raise achievement.

All of the policies relating to teaching and assessment have been revised so there is a more consistent approach across the school. There is a strong commitment to tackle the inadequacies identified at the last inspection, with the majority of staff recognising their part in the improvement process. They have been keen to take advantage of the school-to-school support to develop their skills. However, not all staff are as engaged in planning improvements and sharing ideas, as they could be. Pupils similarly have a limited role in planning topics and feeding back about what works well for them in the classroom. The new Chair of Governors has experience and expertise in supporting school improvement. He has a clear understanding of the challenges facing the school and is leading developments effectively, to strengthen governors' roles in driving improvement.

### **External support**

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose and both the local authority and the Dioceses have provided good support for the school. The local authority acted quickly to broker support for school leaders, securing an associate headteacher for two days a week and a full-time seconded assistant headteacher. They have provided good support to develop leadership and key policies and provide a good model for teaching. The local authority has also provided a broad menu of bespoke and whole school training. The Diocese has provided an experienced Chair of Governors to lead developments within the governing body and challenge and manage the performance of senior leaders. These actions have laid firm foundations for further improvement.