

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancs Investment Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 0300 1231231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566855
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
gail.hill@cfbt.com



25 October 2012

Mrs Christine Gabbott
Headteacher
Pickhill Church of England Primary School
The Green
Pickhill
Thirsk
North Yorkshire
YO7 4JL

Dear Mrs Gabbott

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

Following my visit to your school on 24 October 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 fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in June 2011. 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 - satisfactory

Newly Qualified Teachers may be appointed.

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 and Young People's Service for North Yorkshire.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Keeler

Her Majesty's Inspector

January 2012



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in June 2011

- Improve teaching to achieve rapid improvements in pupils' achievement throughout the school, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and in reading and writing by:
 - increasing the accountability of teachers for the progress made by pupils in their class
 - providing increased challenge for the more-able pupils
 - making sure that all teachers act fully upon the direction given by the school's leadership
 - ensuring that all lessons are well matched to the needs of all pupils
 - making sure that all teachers assess pupils' work routinely during lessons
 - making sure that all teachers have high expectations for how well pupils can achieve
 - developing teachers' ability to manage low-level disruption in lessons.

- Ensure the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, on securing improved performance by:
 - rapidly improving teaching so that it is consistently good or better
 - ensuring that self-evaluation is rigorous and outcomes are acted upon decisively and rapidly
 - ensuring that English and mathematics are managed effectively.

Special measures: monitoring of Pickhill Church of England Primary School

Report from the fourth monitoring inspection on 24 October 2012

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the Chair of the Governing Body, the Chair of the School Improvement Committee, staff, pupils and a representative from the local authority.

Context

A teacher for the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 took up her appointment at the beginning of the summer term 2012. The teacher covering the Key Stage 2 class since the previous inspection has now been appointed on a permanent basis.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Cohorts are very small, so trends in outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 should be treated with some caution. The unvalidated end of Year 6 national tests in 2012 showed that all pupils achieved age-related expectations in English and mathematics. This is an improvement on the previous year as is the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in both subjects. Pupils are making better progress than at the time of the previous inspection as the legacy of ineffective teaching is addressed. This is becoming more apparent in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. However, the outcomes of lesson observations undertaken during the inspection in all key stages indicates that there is still some room for improvement in respect of the progress pupils make as they move through the school.

The quality of teaching

The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and this is reflected in better outcomes. Teaching noticeably improved throughout the school during the summer term 2012 and gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding have reduced. However, the rate of improvement has now plateaued and this is beginning to restrict progress. Planning has improved but sometimes includes too much detail and too many learning intentions. As a result, learning is superficial, not targeted sufficiently on the individual and lacks challenge. Insufficient consideration is being given to how best manage pupils' learning when they work independently and how to make the best use of time and support in order to effectively teach targeted groups of pupils. The teaching of phonics, the sounds that letters make, is an established part of the day and younger pupils' ability to use their knowledge continues to enhance progress in reading. They are also becoming adept at linking sounds and letters which is supporting their writing. The quality of marking has

improved and pupils receive feedback that is encouraging while at the same time pointing out how they may improve.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve teaching to achieve rapid improvements in pupils' achievement throughout the school, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and in reading and writing – satisfactory.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are generally well-behaved and only become distracted when they are not sufficiently challenged. Pupils move around the school in an orderly and sensible fashion. They are keen to take an active part during lessons and generally listen carefully to their teachers. Pupils continue to work collaboratively and demonstrate respect for others within and beyond the school.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The quality of leadership and management has improved considerably since June last year and this is why pupils are making better progress than they were at that time. However, the improvement process in relation to the quality of teaching has not maintained the momentum evident during the previous monitoring visit. This is because leadership has not achieved a balance between monitoring provision in different key stages and intervening where necessary. The improvements secured over the past sixteen months indicate that the school has the capacity to successfully address the matter. Subject leadership has now been shared more equitably in an attempt to further drive improvement. While this is a relatively new initiative, staff are keen to take responsibility and play their part in raising achievement. Governors continue to have a clear understanding of the schools' strengths and weaknesses and monitor progress keenly. The school improvement group have high expectations and have raised the bar in the way they now hold the headteacher to account for the work of the school.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, on securing improvement – satisfactory.

External support

The quality of support by the local authority is good. The support and challenge by the local authority school effectiveness team is appreciated by the headteacher and the governing body.

