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

Dear Mr Cox

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

Following my visit with to your school on 7–8 November 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 second 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.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – 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 second monitoring inspection on 7–8 November 2012**

#### **Evidence**

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

#### **Context**

The school has re-organised its teaching staff. One teacher has left the school since the last monitoring visit. There is a temporary member of staff in one class. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals has risen recently, as has the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

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

Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has improved. The results from the national tests (SATs) in 2012 for pupils in Year 6 showed that pupils left with levels of attainment that are average. There was very little difference between the results for boys and girls in reading and mathematics, but boys did a little worse in writing. The difference is much less than it has been in the past and this pattern is now consistent across the school. The number of pupils who reached the higher levels at the end of Year 6 was average for girls but below average for boys in reading, writing and mathematics. The attainment of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs was average in writing and mathematics, but above average in reading. Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium (the additional funds provided for those eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority) achieved better than their national counterparts. In contrast with previous years, almost all pupils made the progress that is expected of them.

Pupils' work has improved in English and mathematics in all year groups. The improvement in writing since the previous monitoring visit is clear. Pupils are much more enthusiastic about their writing, typified by Year 3 and 4 pupils who are enjoying writing their own versions of *The Selfish Giant*. In some classes, pupils are equally positive about the improvements that they have seen in the way that much of their work is marked. In these classes, outstanding marking is helping pupils to fully understand what they need to do to improve. Boys are as positive as girls about these improvements, and enjoy the more interesting topics that are being studied. The use, for example, of data concerning aircraft shot down during the Second World War captivated pupils in a mathematics lesson: as a result, they worked hard and progressed well. Where lessons are less well structured, for example in a

practical mathematics lesson, opportunities for learning are lost and progress is very slow.

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

- 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**

Teaching has improved since the previous monitoring visit and a higher proportion of lessons are good. This is because the school has made significant changes to the way that lessons are taught. A more flexible approach to lesson planning is helping teachers to meet the needs of all pupils from the start of the lesson. This style of teaching has removed the need for pupils to listen to teachers for lengthy periods of time at the beginning of lessons. It is very popular with pupils. One boy said, 'It means that we can get on with learning,' and a girl told the inspector that, 'I am able to fulfil my potential.' All teachers are changing the way that they teach and some have adapted more quickly than others. Evidence in pupils' books indicates that pupils are making more rapid progress in the classes where the revised style of teaching has been fully adopted.

A small amount of teaching remains inadequate. In these lessons, teachers are not sufficiently aware of the progress that all pupils are making and spend too little time challenging pupils' thinking. As a result, pupils make little progress or spend too much time on tasks that should be very quickly completed. For example, in one lesson two pupils spent over ten minutes looking up a word in a very complex dictionary because they did not know how to use it properly. This resulted in very little progress being made and a good deal of learning time being wasted.

The feedback that pupils receive has improved significantly since the previous monitoring visit. Teachers have developed good systems which involve pupils regularly reading and responding to the marking of their work. Where this is most effective, pupils are required to think about where they can improve and demonstrate that they have understood the guidance by making improvements. This very high standard of marking is not consistent across the school.

Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning in most lessons. They have the most impact when they are flexible and work in partnership with the teacher. On rare occasions, teaching assistants remain for long periods with small groups of pupils and limit the opportunities for them to develop important skills of independence. Teaching assistants also make valuable contributions to the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make). All staff have now received training in this area and the quality of teaching of phonics has improved since the previous monitoring visit.

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

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

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

The school's revised approach to behaviour had very recently been introduced at the time of the previous monitoring visit. Since then, it has had time to become well established and this has resulted in much less disruption to learning. Pupils enjoy good relationships with teachers and are very positive about the improvement in behaviour across the school. Instances of disruption are uncommon but, when these do occur, they are generally handled well.

Procedures to safeguard pupils meet statutory requirements.

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

The leadership of the school has provided a clear direction for improvement since the previous monitoring visit. The headteacher's determined implementation of the revised behaviour policy has created a school which is better placed to improve. Middle leaders have been committed to improving teaching and have been very receptive to external support: this has helped to change the style of teaching in most classrooms over a short period of time. School leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance, drawn from well organised and clear analysis of assessment data. School leaders do not currently provide sufficiently detailed guidance for teachers about the precise ways in which they can improve their teaching.

A revised system of planning has been introduced. The lower school (Years 3 and 4) and the upper school (Years 5 and 6) each plan as a team. This provides consistency across the classes for pupils in the same year groups. Pupils' work indicates this has been more successful for the upper school team, where work is taught in a similar way. The lower school team have not been as consistent and too much individual variation remains. Existing good practice, for example where teaching, marking and planning are strong, is not sufficiently used to support the improvement of teaching across the school.

Governors have an increasingly clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and they are now holding school leaders to account in a manner which is both supportive and challenging. They have a better understanding of national data and how this information can be used to evaluate the school's work, having received training from the local authority.

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

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

### **External support**

The local authority has provided a range of support strategies. These have been welcomed by the school and have contributed to school's overall improvement. Local authority advisors and consultants have supported individual staff and have also worked with teams of teachers to improve the planning of lessons. In addition, local authority advisors have supported the governing body in improving their understanding of data. The school has received valuable help in re-shaping the way that lessons are taught, and teachers speak positively about the impact that this support has had on their own teaching and on the progress of pupils. The local authority is active in both supporting the school's leaders but also in holding them to account for the progress that the school is making.