

CfBT Inspection Services  
Suite 22

West Lancs Investment Centre T 0300 123 1231

Maple View

Skelmersdale

WN8 9TG

Text Phone: 0161 618 8524

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 01695 566932

Direct F 01695 729320

Direct email: hcarnall@cfbt.com



6 December 2012

Mrs Katie Tomlinson

Associate Headteacher

Accrington St John with St Augustine Church of England Primary School

Maudsley Street

Accrington

Lancashire

BB5 6AD

Dear Mrs Tomlinson

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of St John with St Augustine Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit with Paul Latham, Additional Inspector, to your school on 4 and 5 December 2012, 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 June 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 Executive Director for Children & Young People for Lancashire.

Yours sincerely

Jean Kendall

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics for all pupils by:
  - increasing the proportion of consistently good or better teaching
  - increasing and improving the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) and of reading
  - taking prompt action to support pupils who are not making good progress
  - setting higher expectations for pupils' behaviour and more effective rewards so that good behaviour enhances learning in lessons
  - ensuring that assessment is accurate so that suitably challenging targets can be set, especially for higher-attaining pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - improving the quality of teachers' professional development with a focus on increasing rates of pupils' progress in lessons through fast-paced, challenging learning activities
  - sharing existing good practice in the school
  - raising expectations so that all teachers have equally high expectations of the progress that pupils should make.
  
- Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels, including governance, and increase the capacity to improve by:
  - ensuring that the results of regular and rigorous monitoring are used to bring about further improvement
  - robustly and accurately evaluating the school's performance and the impact of actions to raise standards
  - raising expectations regarding the amount of progress that pupils are expected to make and holding teachers to account more effectively
  - improving the curriculum so that it meets the needs of all groups of pupils and contributes to their good and better progress
  - sharing data on pupils' progress and attainment regularly with the governing body so that members are more effective in rigorously holding the school to account
  - providing more opportunities for middle leaders to train and monitor staff in the areas for which they are responsible.

## **Report on the first monitoring inspection on 4-5 December 2012**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the associate headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, representatives of the local authority, staff and pupils. They observed teaching in every class and looked at pupils' books.

### **Context**

Since the last inspection, the headteacher has retired. The local authority has seconded an associate headteacher, who is currently headteacher at a nearby successful school, until August 2013.

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

The associate headteacher has acted quickly to raise pupils' achievement. She has introduced 'pupil progress' meetings and set suitably challenging targets for each pupil. The meetings are supporting teachers to assess pupils' work more accurately and identify pupils who are not making good progress. Pupils who need additional help are being taught in small groups. Those who have special educational needs have good quality individual education plans, with clear targets for improvement. These developments are at early stages but provide firm foundations for pupils of all ability to make more rapid progress in the future.

Pupils are starting to make better progress in lessons because teachers are developing more effective approaches to planning and assessment. However, there is still some variability in the pace of learning. Progress is most rapid where the teacher has accurately assessed what pupils can do already, clearly explains what they need to learn and gives them time to practise their skills. This was seen in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, where pupils confidently tackled division problems. Progress slows in some lessons because explanations are unclear and activities are not set at the right level.

The most recent test data show improvement at Key Stage 1 but standards are still well below expected levels, given pupils' starting points. Children do not get off to a quick enough start in the Reception class and slow progress continues across the school. The gap between school's results and those achieved nationally at Key Stage 2 has widened.

## **The quality of teaching**

Teachers have benefited from professional development and clear leadership to improve the quality of teaching. They have invested time and energy to improve display in classrooms and common areas. This is very much appreciated by the children who now see their school as a bright and happy place.

Teachers have an increased awareness of what is required for a good lesson and a better understanding of how pupils' progress should be measured. Common approaches to lesson planning, assessment and marking have been introduced. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly. When marking pupils' writing, they provide detailed and helpful comments which are relevant to the task and pupils' learning targets. Older pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve but younger pupils do not always understand the comments. Marking in mathematics is less detailed and an area for development.

Teachers' planning shows greater attention to the range of ability within each class. Where teaching is most effective, activities are set at just the right level to enable pupils to persevere with challenging tasks and find things out for themselves. In an effective Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils were engrossed in researching different accounts of the birth of Christ. Teaching is less effective where activities are too easy and are quickly completed by pupils. Such activities do not build on pupils' knowledge and skills and pupils quickly lose interest. In some lessons, the activities are not explained clearly enough or are too complex. Such activities require a lot of support from adults, with the result that pupils do little of the work for themselves.

New approaches to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics have been introduced. An appropriate programme of systematic phonics teaching (teaching pupils about the sounds that letters make) has been introduced in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Pupils make the best progress in the small group sessions that rapidly build on their knowledge of letters and sounds and key words. Pupils' progress is slower in sessions where they do not have opportunities to apply their knowledge to reading and writing activities. Guided reading has been introduced on a regular basis across the whole school. This is at early stages and further training is planned to hone teachers' skills in teaching reading.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils are well behaved around the school. They feel safe and procedures to safeguard them meet all requirements. Pupils are polite and spoke knowledgeably to inspectors. They value the improvements already made to the environment, in teaching and in behaviour. They feel that behaviour has improved with 'less messing about' in lessons. Pupils' behaviour in the lessons seen by inspectors was largely dependent on the quality of teaching and aptness of activities. Pupils respond well when activities are interesting, practical and thought provoking. They persevere with

tasks and take pride in their work when encouraged to work independently. However, they become restless if activities are too hard or too easy. Some pupils seek support with their work too quickly because they are not used to working things out for themselves.

Teachers mostly manage behaviour appropriately but occasionally can place too much emphasis on behaviour management, which slows the pace of learning. Although pupils are clear about the rules for behaviour in each class, approaches vary and different rewards and sanctions are applied. Leaders have set the implementation of a whole-school approach to behaviour management as a priority.

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

The associate headteacher is providing strong and effective leadership to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement. She is setting the right priorities and modelling successful leadership for other staff. The deputy headteacher has a key role in leading teaching and learning and modelling good practice in teaching. The governing body is better equipped to challenge and support school leaders, following training from the local authority. A 'Standards and Effectiveness Committee' has been established to lead on monitoring the school's progress with improvement plans. Governors' role in monitoring beyond this is currently limited but planned for the future.

Detailed and comprehensive systems have been introduced to monitor the quality of teaching and track pupils' progress. Leaders and governors now have an accurate view of the school's performance and appropriate plans to secure improvement. Professional development has focused on whole-school priorities to secure accurate assessment and promote more effective teaching approaches in literacy and numeracy. Teachers are very positive about the training and are keen to have further, more personalised professional development. The associate headteacher has established a new approach to the management of teachers' performance, which sets detailed and relevant targets clearly linked to pupils' progress and teachers' training needs.

The roles and responsibilities of middle leaders have been reviewed. They have devised appropriate action plans for literacy, numeracy and support for pupils with special educational needs. Their role in monitoring is limited and is a priority for further training. All staff are fully committed to developing their roles and ensuring pupils achieve as well as they can.

### **External support**

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose. The local authority has taken swift and effective action to secure strong leadership for the school while a new headteacher is being recruited. Local authority advisers and consultants have

provided good quality training for governors and teachers to develop their skills.  
They are now tailoring support more precisely to the needs of individual teachers.