

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22

West Lancs Investment Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 0300 123 1231

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

Direct T 01695 566939

Direct F 01965 729320

Direct email: glaw@cfbt.com

19 December 2012

Mr Tony Armstrong
Headteacher
St John's Wood Community School
Longridge
Knutsford
Cheshire
WA16 8PA

Dear Mr Armstrong

Special measures monitoring inspection of St John's Wood Community School

Following my visit to your school on 14 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 September 2012.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the executive headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and two representatives of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plan were evaluated.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the acting headteacher has resumed her substantive post as deputy headteacher at the school. A new headteacher has been appointed who took up the post from October 2012. The soft federation between St. John's Wood and two other special schools in the local authority has been strengthened further. The executive headteacher of the federation provides additional leadership

capacity for the school for a significant proportion of the week. An additional deputy headteacher has been contracted to work at the school on a temporary basis. The acting Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed to the substantive post.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Senior leadership has been restructured and strengthened since the previous inspection. The headteacher and executive headteacher have worked effectively with local authority officers to construct an action plan that focuses sharply on the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Success criteria and interim milestones by which leaders can check progress in the short and medium term are identified clearly. Leaders have worked efficiently and methodically to establish an accurate baseline from which to measure the progress made in tackling areas of serious concern. Nevertheless, they are aware that some obstacles to improvement remain. The plan has been shared with staff, some of whom have taken responsibility for implementing immediate action, for example, to improve the climate for learning. Student council members have also contributed to plans to improve behaviour and its management.

Staff have benefited from links established by leaders through the soft federation. For example, a recent training day enabled all teaching and non-teaching staff to reflect on their roles and share good practice. Additional external support provided by the local authority or commissioned by school leaders is targeted appropriately to secure improvement.

The recently appointed Chair of the Governing Body has embarked on training to ensure that he is fully informed about the responsibilities attached to his role. He has also established useful links with the Chairs of governing bodies attached to the other schools within the federation. Individual governors have taken responsibility for a specific aspect of the plan in order to understand better the work of the school and to make a greater contribution to checking progress made.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose.
The school's action plan is fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

PROTECT-INSPECTION



This monitoring inspection letter will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State the Chair of the Governing Body and the Strategic Director - Children, Families and Adults for Cheshire East.

Yours sincerely

Sara Morrissey
Her Majesty's Inspector