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Mrs C Price
Headteacher
St John the Evangelist Church of England Primary School
Bluebell Way
Carterton
OX18 1JF

Dear Mrs Price

Special measures monitoring inspection of St John the Evangelist Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 14 March 2013, 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 November 2012.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the acting headteacher, the deputy headteacher, two governors and a representative of the local authority. In addition, the inspector conducted a telephone conversation with the Chair of the Governing Body on the day before the inspection. This timing was at the request of the Chair of the Governing Body and was due to his pastoral commitments. The local authority's statement of action and the school's raising achievement plan were evaluated.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection in November 2012, the headteacher has resigned and left at the end of December 2012. The deputy headteacher took over the leadership of the school at the start of the spring term 2013. On 23 January an acting

headteacher was appointed to lead the school until the end of December 2013. One short-term teaching post ceased at the end of the autumn term. An assistant headteacher took up her post in January 2013. She is also the English subject leader. One teacher began maternity leave in January 2013. One teacher returned from maternity leave in March. One teaching assistant resigned and left in the spring term. The term of office of two parent and two staff governors has expired and two new parent governors and two staff governors have been elected.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Following the resignation of the headteacher, the governing body and the local authority acted quickly and decisively to secure stability in the leadership of the school. During the short interim period in January, the deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers began to develop new systems to ensure all staff discuss and agree policy changes and have a better understanding of the information on pupils' attainment and progress. Since her arrival, the acting headteacher has made a positive impact on staff morale and teamwork. The leadership structure has been reorganised to ensure all phases across the school are managed by a member of the senior leadership team, which has improved communication and support. There is a renewed focus on supporting rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and accelerating pupils' progress, by careful analysis of the performance of groups of pupils.

The governing body responded constructively to the outcome of the inspection by actively seeking to improve the impact of its work. Committee structures have been reorganised and members, particularly those new to their roles, are attending training to enable them to have an accurate understanding of their roles and responsibilities. There is a strong impetus to increase the effectiveness of their challenge and support for the school through effective questioning. The composition of governors' committees is closely linked to the members' skills and expertise, enabling them to be better equipped to hold the school to account.

The draft plans are still evolving and need some reworking to sharpen them. Nonetheless, the identified actions are designed to address the issues for improvement specified by the inspection team.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose. However, during the evaluation of the statement, the local authority officer agreed that including the following information will ensure greater clarity:

- specific timescales for each action

- the expected impact of each action
- how the plan is to be evaluated.

The school's raising achievement plan is fit for purpose. It identifies the most important priorities, although it would benefit by including the following:

- more specific actions
- specified and limited timescales for each action
- identifying the person responsible for implementing each action
- identifying who will be monitoring each action
- including the milestones on the way to achieving the actions.

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

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Oxfordshire and the Director of the Diocese of Oxfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector