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Elizabeth Holmes
Headteacher
Mereside Church of England Primary School
Mereside, Springfield
Shrewsbury
SY2 6LE

Dear Mrs Holmes

Special measures monitoring inspection of Mereside Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 26 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 December 2012.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and staff, four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, the local authority's school improvement adviser and one of two local leaders in education who is currently providing consultancy support for the school. The local authority's statement of action and the school's development and action plans were evaluated.

Context

Two temporary teachers are teaching classes to replace teachers who have left. A temporary, experienced deputy headteacher has been seconded from another school to start in April until the governing body makes a substantive appointment. The headteacher has taken over responsibility for managing mathematics, although this responsibility will transfer to the temporary deputy headteacher in April. A new chair and vice chair joined the governing body in September 2012. In addition, there have been changes to committee structures, including the introduction of a monitoring

committee that reports to the main governing body on standards, teaching and the quality of learning.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Governance is much sharper than at the time of the last inspection because the level of scrutiny and challenge has increased. The local authority will be providing further training to improve governors' understanding of assessment data and will also be undertaking regular evaluations of governance through its routine reviews. The headteacher is building further leadership capacity by working alongside two local leaders in education, one of whom is a headteacher of a good school. The headteacher, governors, consultants and the school improvement adviser are rightly focusing on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The school's development plans have measures of success and targets that focus on the most urgent areas for improvement. These targets and monitoring activities synchronise well with, and are guided by, the local authority's statement of action. There are milestones and dates to structure the frequency of monitoring, as well as targets to aim for that are challenging and realistic. These leave teachers in no doubt about what constitutes good or better teaching and set minimum expectations from which to evaluate their performance. However, some of the performance targets in the school's action plans do not refer specifically enough to measures of pupil progress, including that of groups and individuals, so that leaders can gauge the impact that teaching is having on raising achievement in all classes.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's development and action plans are fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection. This condition will be reviewed during future monitoring inspections.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Shropshire local authority and the Director of the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou
Her Majesty's Inspector