

CfBT Inspection Services  
Suite 22  
West Lancs Investment Centre  
Maple View  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 9TG

T 0300 123 1231  
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



27 June 2013

Mrs Katie Tomlinson  
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 Accrington St John with St Augustine Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 25 and 26 June 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third 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 not making enough 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 Interim Executive Director for Children and Young People for Lancashire.

Yours sincerely

Jean Olsson-Law  
**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 third monitoring inspection on 25 and 26 June 2013**

### **Evidence**

The inspector observed teaching and learning in all but one class, looked at pupils' work and analysed the most recent assessment data. She met with three governors, a representative of the local authority, the associate headteacher and school leaders and took account of their monitoring and self-evaluation. The inspector also spoke with a small number of parents and met the newly appointed headteacher.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring visit, the governing body has appointed a headteacher to start in September 2013. An assistant headteacher is seconded to the school until the end of July 2013 to cover the absence of the Year 4 teacher and support developments in provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. There was temporary cover in Year 2 due to the absence of the class teacher. The Year 6 teacher, who is also the mathematics leader, leaves the school at the end of the year, following a promotion, and an assistant headteacher has been seconded to teach the Year 6 class next year.

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

Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved in Year 2 and Year 6, halting the downward trend that was evident when the school was inspected in June 2012. This indicates that the school is moving in the right direction. However, this inspection found that the progress pupils make in lessons is still too variable. Too many pupils still have gaps in their knowledge and skills and their progress is still too slow across the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. Even though pupils make more rapid progress in Year 5 and Year 6, there is too much ground for them to make up in order to achieve as well as they should by the time they leave Year 6.

In the Reception class, children got off to a slow start at the start of the current academic year, because too much time was spent getting to know what the children could do. Although provision has improved, the pace of children's learning has been too slow over the whole year to make up for this. Better procedures, including visits by staff to children's nursery and home, are now in place to ensure children make a more rapid start in September.

Pupils in Year 2 did better than previous cohorts in standardised national assessments. Their attainment in writing has improved significantly and is close to national levels. Attainment in reading and mathematics has also improved but remains lower than the 2012 national average. The Year 6 teacher assessments show that attainment has risen this year. However, the pupils have not done as well as they should given their prior attainment at Key Stage 1. This is because they have not made enough progress in the past in writing and mathematics.

## **The quality of teaching**

The improvements to teaching noted at the last monitoring inspection have been sustained, but further gains since then have not been secured. The quality of teaching is still too variable and pupils still have too many gaps in their learning because important literacy and mathematical skills are not taught systematically. Consequently, pupils fail to build on what they know from lesson to lesson and as they move through the school. Although marking has improved, teachers are not ensuring that some basic spelling and punctuation errors are corrected properly. Aspects, such as shape, measures and data handling in mathematics and writing for different purposes and audiences, are not taught in sufficient depth. So, although teachers are delivering some good lessons, teaching is not proving effective enough over time to secure pupils' continuous progress in writing and mathematics.

There are, however, some firm foundations on which to build. Lessons are better planned to take account of the learning needs of different ability groups and are better organised to give pupils more time to work independently. Good lessons were observed in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, where teachers were using a wide range of teaching methods and providing purposeful activities to engage and interest pupils. Teaching has continued to be most effective in Years 5 and 6 where pupils make the most rapid progress. The teaching of mathematical calculation, phonics (the sounds that letters make) and guided reading has improved across the school, following further professional development. New policies to improve the quality of pupils' presentation in their books and ensure homework is given regularly are beginning to have a positive impact.

There have been some improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage with changes to the organisation of teaching in the classroom and outdoors. Children have a wider range of activity to choose from and an increased focus on speaking and listening is helping them to develop a richer vocabulary. A key worker system has been introduced, but it is not working as effectively as it could. Further revisions are needed in order to make sure that adults are deployed appropriately and that children can benefit from the range of adults' experience and skills.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils and parents report that the culture of the school has improved significantly over the last twelve months. Parents feel that their children are much more interested in learning and are enjoying lessons more. Both parents and pupils are enthusiastic about the improvements to display and classrooms. Pupils were cooperative and keen to do their best in all the lessons observed. In the best lessons, pupils showed stamina when persevering with challenging tasks. Pupils feel safe at school because teachers deal with any inappropriate behaviour or bullying effectively.

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

The associate headteacher has provided clear and effective leadership since her secondment to the school in October 2012. She has introduced a number of new systems and approaches to improve assessment, lesson planning, marking and behaviour management, supported by professional development and advice. Alongside these, she has introduced rigorous monitoring and performance management procedures to hold teachers to account for the

progress pupils make in their classes. She has been firm in tackling weaknesses and challenging underperformance. Together with the deputy headteacher, she has worked tirelessly to drive improvements forward.

Despite this drive from the headteacher and deputy headteacher, improvements are not sufficient, being about a term behind where they need to be. The key milestones set in the local authority statement of action and the school action plans have not been achieved. Teachers are at differing stages of implementing new initiatives and more effective practice is not firmly established. The pupil progress meetings are providing useful opportunities for teachers to discuss how well pupils are doing and to plan intervention and support for pupils who are not doing as well as they should. The process is working well in some classes, but not all teachers are effective in using this information to secure more rapid progress.

Governors have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They are now well informed and know where improvement is needed. They have appointed an effective clerk to governors and allocated governors to committees to make best use of their expertise. The recently developed action plan is detailed and identifies appropriate actions to develop governors' roles in monitoring and supporting school leaders.

The roles and responsibilities of middle leaders have developed further. The mathematics leader has a clear overview of teaching and of pupils' achievement in mathematics across the whole school. Her well organised file provides detailed records and action plans for the new subject leader starting in September. The literacy leader has increased her role in monitoring and action planning, but is still at early stages of analysing strengths and weaknesses across the school. Developments in special needs provision are being supported well by the seconded assistant headteacher who has expertise in this area.

### **External support**

Local authority advisers and consultants have provided a great deal of training and support for middle leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. The focus has been on improving teaching and increasing the capacity of staff to drive and check improvements in their own classes and responsibility areas. There has been some improvement as a result of this support but teaching and achievement have not improved as much as they need to.