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28 June 2013

Mrs Heather Knightley  
Headteacher  
St John and St James CofE Primary School  
Grove Street  
London  
N18 2TL

Dear Mrs Knightley

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St John and St James Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 28 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

#### **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you, other senior and middle leaders, a few pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, and a member of the London Diocesan Board to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The following documents were scrutinised: the school improvement plan, pupils' work, monitoring files on teaching and assessment records, and information on performance management.

#### **Context**

Following the section 5 inspection, two members of staff have resigned, including the deputy headteacher. The assistant headteacher and phase leaders have taken on additional responsibilities prior to the restructuring of the senior leadership team in September 2013.

## **Main findings**

You and your senior leaders, including the governing body and London Diocesan Board, and other staff readily accepted the inspection judgement. The collective response to addressing the weaknesses has been used to produce a well-considered and timely action plan. This underpins the drive to changing the culture of the school. Complacency has been replaced by a passion and determination to drive school improvement. This is evident in a sharp focus on developing the quality of teaching and a systematic approach to tracking pupils' progress. You have stepped up expectations; judgements on teaching are harsher and where necessary, staff have moved on. Conversely, you and senior leaders are proving a range of good quality support and opportunities for staff to develop their practices. This includes working in quartets, using research ideas and teaching reviews. Findings are being put to good use to develop teaching and assessment practices, particularly in numeracy and literacy. However, while your analysis of assessment information considers some categories of pupils, ethnicity is not covered. There is good use of weekly and monthly action plans and of pupil assessment meetings to monitor progress and provide targeted support for groups and individual pupils. The pace of change is fast and staff are supportive. You all realise that the full impact of the work is still to be seen. Nevertheless, within a short time, evidence shows that pupils are beginning to make much better progress in both literacy and numeracy. For instance, improvement in teaching phonics (the sound of letters) is increasing all aspects of literacy. There is also more emphasis on developing basic numeracy skills.

The governing body know the school's strengths and weaknesses. Members have shrewdly audited their skills and are increasing their capacity to hold staff to account. Good links with phase leaders are contributing to governors gathering first hand evidence, and their training on assessment information is leading to them challenge staff more rigorously about pupils' progress.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- raise achievement further by building on and consolidating initiatives to strengthen the teaching of literacy and numeracy in all subjects
- ensure expectations are suitably high for the more able pupils so they can achieve the highest level at the end of each key stage.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

## **External support**

You and the senior leaders are responding very well to the training, review findings and support provided by the local authority, including the consultant. This is increasing your capacity to drive improvement. For example assessment information on pupils' progress is sharpening practices and are directly linked to the training provided. Furthermore, visits to good and outstanding schools are increasingly helping staff to realise that your pupils can excel.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Enfield, and the London Diocese.

Yours sincerely

Carmen Rodney  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**