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4 July 2013

Mrs Penny Vernon  
Acting Headteacher  
Kirkby Fleetham Church of England Primary School  
Forge Lane  
Kirkby Fleetham  
Northallerton  
North Yorkshire  
DL7 0SA

Dear Mrs Vernon

**Special measures monitoring inspection of Kirkby Fleetham Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 3 July 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 making reasonable 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 Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service for North Yorkshire.

Yours sincerely

Christine Inkster  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in June 2012**

- Improve the quality of teaching to be consistently good or better and hence accelerate pupils' progress and raise their attainment particularly in writing and mathematics by:
  - eliminating all inadequate teaching
  - improving teachers' knowledge of National Curriculum levels to enable them to accurately assess pupils' attainment and progress and to provide them with the work they need to reach the next level
  - teachers using accurate assessment information to plan activities which sufficiently challenge each pupil to take their next step in learning
  - developing teachers' questioning skills to provide a clear understanding of how well pupils are doing
  - maintaining a good pace of learning in all lessons
  - increasing the opportunities provided for pupils to write at length and to apply their knowledge to solve problems and carry out independent investigations
  - improving the effectiveness in the marking of pupils' work to aid accurate assessment of their ability and to provide additional guidance for improvement
  - teachers planning tasks which are relevant to pupils' experiences and which inspire and motivate them to learn.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in order to make the necessary improvements in pupils' achievement and the quality of provision by:
  - developing the skills of all leaders and managers, including the governing body, in effective monitoring and evaluation
  - carrying out rigorous systematic checks on the quality of teaching which take full account of how well pupils are learning
  - providing all staff with detailed feedback on how to improve their performance
  - regularly tracking and analysing the progress made by all classes and groups of pupils within each subject
  - introducing a clear system for the identification of those pupils with special educational needs
  - using the analyses of systematic monitoring and evaluation to highlight key priorities in development plans which include measurable targets linked to improved outcomes for pupils
  - making middle leaders more accountable for provision in the subjects which they manage.

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 3 July 2013**

### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work including observing five lessons, two of which were conducted jointly with the acting headteachers, and carried out a learning walk. She scrutinised documents including information about pupils' progress, pupils' work, teachers' planning, the school improvement plan and information from a local authority review. The inspector met with the two acting headteachers, other school leaders, a group of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection visit on 22 March 2013 there have been no changes to staff. Two new parent governors have been appointed and there remains a vacancy on the governing body. There is currently an Acting Chair of the Governing Body.

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

The school's data show that pupils' progress is rapidly improving in reading, writing and mathematics, and that attainment for most pupils is rising to meet or exceed the expectations for their age. However, there are still some pupils across the school who are not attaining as well as others of their age. The rates of progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding (additional government funding) are also increasing as they are receiving specific, targeted support to address their individual needs. Staff are now more aware of how well pupils should learn and have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils confirm that they are now receiving more challenging work and this was seen in the lessons observed.

The work in pupils' books shows that the school's actions to improve the quality of writing are becoming more effective. Pupils' handwriting skills are improving as they are now using a cursive style, but the presentation of their work remains variable. Steps have been taken to improve the accuracy of spelling in pupils' literacy books, but this is not always evident in their other work. Pupils are now writing at length and the content of their writing is more imaginative and improving. While there are now discrete sessions for pupils to learn phonic sounds (letters and the sounds they represent) these are not always as effective as they should be. There are also occasions when teachers miss opportunities for pupils to learn their phonic sounds throughout the day in other aspects of their work. Pupils' mathematics books show they are making better progress and are tackling more challenging work, although calculations are not always set out correctly.

## **The quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching continues to improve across the school, enabling pupils to make better progress. However, leaders' records show that a very small amount of teaching is still not good enough. Teachers are now planning more precisely to meet the specific needs of different groups of pupils. Pupils say their lessons are now more interesting and they are enjoying their learning more. This was shown in a lesson observed during the visit when pupils in Key Stage 2 participated in different challenging mathematical investigations for each group where they had to use their 'thinking skills' to find solutions to the 'killer questions' posed by the teacher. They were highly motivated and engaged in their learning and worked cooperatively to discuss ideas and resolve the problems.

Teachers are using questioning skills more effectively to probe pupils' understanding and pupils are expected to give reasons for their answers. The quality of marking is improving, particularly in Key Stage 2, and, while 'next steps' are identified for pupils to improve their work in Key Stage 1, these are not as precise as they could be. Pupils say they have opportunities to respond to marking and address any misconceptions. Older pupils have a clearer understanding of their personal learning targets and what they have to do to improve, but younger pupils are less sure. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are able to work more independently and are cooperating well together, such as when they were mixing magic potions in the water tray outdoors. They shared equipment, were talking about what they were doing and making helpful suggestions to each other. The teacher is now taking opportunities to extend children's learning, for example, when she prompted a child to investigate how many small containers of water it would take to fill a large container, he was able to count these appropriately. Pupils are keen to work independently throughout the school and are making increasingly effective use of information and communication technology to carry out research and record what they have learned.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

In lessons, pupils now work with more concentration and are keen to learn. They cooperate well together, particularly when working in groups and pairs and are always willing to help a classmate if they are struggling. Pupils say that behaviour has improved, particularly at lunchtimes and playtimes because there is now a clear code of behaviour, but that occasionally, behaviour is not quite as good as it usually is when they have visiting supply teachers.

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

Through their actions, the acting headteachers demonstrate they are continuing to improve the quality of teaching and are ensuring that pupils are making better

progress. They are tackling any weaknesses in the school in a sensitive and professional manner. Staff are now more highly motivated and are working more effectively as a team.

Subject leaders have a greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subjects or areas for which they are responsible and of the progress being made by pupils across the school. They say they have benefitted from working with leaders in other schools, including the partner school, and from sharing good practice with other subject leaders at local authority network meetings. Their confidence has grown and they are now committed to ensuring any underachievement is promptly addressed as shown by the improvements in pupils' achievement.

Governors are continuing to take positive steps to ensure there is stability in the leadership of the school. There are appropriate strategic plans in place to address this. They are gaining first-hand evidence of the work of the school through visits to observe for themselves how well pupils are learning. This deeper insight is enabling them to challenge the work of leaders more rigorously by holding them to account for the progress made by pupils.

### **External support**

The local authority continues to provide effective support when required, although this has reduced over time as the school's leadership capacity is improving. The special educational needs coordinator has particularly valued the support given to help her cater for the specific needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, enabling these pupils to make quicker progress than in the past. The school continues to benefit from the partnership established with the school led by one of the acting headteachers, Kell Bank Church of England Primary School, and there are increasing opportunities for staff to observe and share good practice in teaching.