

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0117 311 5323
Direct email: suzy.smith@tribalgroup.com



11 October 2013

Mr K Cheetham
Executive Headteacher (acting)
Northiam Church of England Primary School
Main Street
Rye
TN31 6NB

Dear Mr Cheetham

Special measures monitoring inspection of Northiam Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 10 October 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 July 2013.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with you and the two assistant headteachers, a governor and a representative from the local authority. Each classroom was briefly visited and a range of documentation, including the local authority's statement of action and support plan and the school's action plan, were evaluated.

Context

Since the inspection in July 2013, three teachers have left the school, and have been temporarily replaced with supply teachers to teach in three of the four classes. The headteacher has been replaced by you as the acting executive headteacher for two days per week, with one of the assistant headteachers being released from class to cover the remaining three days per week. The governors have been replaced by an interim executive board, appointed by the local authority. Pupil numbers have remained stable.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Although you have only been in post since September, the school has made reasonable progress in starting to address the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. The school's action plan is closely aligned to the local authority's statement of action and covers the areas for improvement. Appropriately, it is in the process of being revised to reflect very recent changes in leadership and management. The plan would benefit from clearer indications regarding how the impact of each action will be measured, by whom and when, so that it is easier to judge how quickly the school is improving.

The local authority's statement of action and support plan address all the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection and meet requirements. They would benefit from further refinement to sharpen the criteria for evaluating the success of improvements in teaching. The local authority is rightly in the process of updating the resource and personnel details to reflect the recent significant changes in staffing and leadership.

The local authority has been swift to put in place an interim executive board with suitably qualified members. However, since approval was only obtained on the day of the inspection, they have not yet had a chance to meet.

The classrooms that were visited were orderly and calm. Work has begun to ensure that teaching supports pupils' learning more effectively in reading, writing and mathematics.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's action plans are fit for purpose.

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 Interim Executive Board, the Director of Children's Services for East Sussex and the Director of Education for the diocese of Chichester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Chris Nye
Additional Inspector