

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



25 October 2013

Mr Mark Proctor  
Headteacher  
Accrington St John with St Augustine Church of England Primary School  
Maudsley Street  
Accrington  
Lancashire  
BB5 6AD

Dear Mr Proctor

**Special measures monitoring inspection of Accrington St John with St Augustine Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 23 and 24 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the fourth 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.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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 Director of Children's Services 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 fourth monitoring inspection on 23 to 24 October 2013**

### **Evidence**

The inspector scrutinised pupils' work and observed teaching and learning in all classes and small groups withdrawn for additional support. These activities were conducted jointly with the headteacher. She spoke with pupils and met with two governors, a representative of the local authority, all staff and the senior leadership team. She took account of the school's monitoring, self-evaluation and improvement planning.

### **Context**

There have been several staffing changes since the last monitoring inspection. A new headteacher took up post in September 2013. Three experienced teachers have been seconded into the school, for the full academic year, teaching in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6. They are leading improvement in key aspects. Two teachers have left the school. Some teachers have changed classes in order to make best use of their skills and expertise.

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

Pupils are making better progress in each class. Improved transition procedures have made sure that pupils build on their previous learning more rapidly from the start of the term. Pupils are making better progress in lessons because assessment is used effectively to plan for each pupil's learning needs. Teachers are providing challenging activities that extend the learning of pupils of all ability, including the more-able and those with special educational needs. This is a significant improvement since the last monitoring inspection.

The standardised assessments for 2013 show that the upward trend in attainment has continued, narrowing the gap between the school's performance and national averages. Pupils' achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check and their attainment at Key Stage 1 improved significantly. Pupils supported by the pupil premium did better than similar pupils nationally. At Key Stage 2, the vast majority of pupils attained expected levels or above in reading and did well in the new grammar, punctuation and spelling test. These gains reflect the improvements made to the teaching of reading and phonics (the sounds that letters make).

Pupils did not do as well as expected in the Key Stage 2 writing assessment and mathematics test. This is partly because of past inadequacies in teaching, which have now been addressed. However, there are still aspects of teaching that require further improvement to make sure pupils sustain the rapid progress they have made at the start of this term. Specifically, teachers need to ensure that pupils develop fluent handwriting and accurate spelling, and methodically develop their mathematical knowledge in each year group.

### **The quality of teaching**

Teachers have acted quickly and with determination to secure improvements to teaching and address the issues identified at the last monitoring inspection. They have implemented

effective approaches to assessment, target-setting and marking, so that pupils know what is expected of them and how they can improve their work. They are building on pupils' prior learning and helping them to make links across different subjects. Classrooms are bright and well organised, with useful displays that promote pupils' independence and self-sufficiency. Teaching assistants are also promoting learning more successfully because they are fully briefed and effectively deployed to support different groups of pupils.

Key skills for reading, grammar and punctuation are being taught more proficiently, enabling pupils to increase their knowledge and skills over time. However, the teaching of handwriting and spelling remain priorities for further improvement. Pupils' untidy handwriting and careless spelling too often detracts from the interesting content of their writing. In mathematics, teachers are covering shape, measures and data handling in more depth. However, number facts and calculation methods are not always taught in sequence so that pupils acquire knowledge they need before moving on to the next steps. Some pupils are taught complicated calculation methods that they find difficult, when simpler approaches would be more helpful.

In the best lessons, the activities planned for different groups are pitched at precisely the right level so all pupils make the best possible progress. In Year 6, for example, pupils of all ability enjoyed solving challenging problems involving perimeter and area. Teachers also use questioning extremely well to probe pupils' understanding and extend their learning. This was seen in an effective lesson in Year 3 where the pupils produced well crafted story openers. Pupils make slower progress in lessons where tasks are too complicated, particularly for pupils who have gaps in the learning or who need more support. Questioning is sometimes too vague so pupils are not sure how to answer and this slows the pace of the lesson.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage good induction procedures have helped children to settle quickly. Children are enjoying learning in an exciting classroom. Adults are supporting learning more effectively when teaching groups and in planning the activities that children can choose for themselves. Activities are well planned to provide a range of stimulating experiences that develop children's knowledge and extend their skills.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

There has been a concerted effort to help pupils improve their behaviour so they learn better from the start of this term. Pupils say lessons are more interesting and activities are at the right level, saying for example, 'We have to work hard but lessons are fun.' Consequently, they are enjoying learning and taking more pride in their work. As one pupil said, 'Teachers have higher expectations and so do we!' Pupils' increased enthusiasm is reflected in their good levels of attendance and positive approach in lessons. Pupils understand the revised behaviour code and feel reassured that any inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with. They say their school is safe and friendly and adults provide help and support if they need it. Adults provide good role models to promote respectful and courteous relationships.

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

There has been a tangible change in the school since the last monitoring inspection. Under the clear and purposeful leadership of the new headteacher, everyone is approaching their

work with renewed energy and enthusiasm. New staff have brought valuable and relevant expertise and all staff are playing their part to drive improvements forward. The headteacher has identified key strengths and areas requiring further development based on thorough monitoring and accurate evaluation. Teachers have a full understanding of the expectations of their teaching and their responsibility to ensure pupils make good progress. Key policies for assessment, marking, target-setting, behaviour management, classroom organisation and teaching are being consistently and effectively applied.

There have been further changes in senior and middle leadership roles, as new staff have joined the school. It is too soon to evaluate the full impact of these changes but there is a real sense of teamwork and ambition. Literacy and numeracy leaders are showing the way in monitoring and action planning but have yet to lead whole-school improvement in other key areas. Leadership in other subjects remains a priority for improvement. The deputy headteacher has taken on the leadership of special educational needs provision, and teaching and learning for this group is improving.

Governors have continued to develop their expertise. They have made important appointments to the school which are proving successful. They are asking more challenging questions of school leaders and have a better understanding of the school's performance. However, their role in monitoring and evaluation is currently limited, particularly in relation to the evaluation of the impact of additional funding and the achievement of different groups of pupils.

The improvements to teaching and strong leadership have increased capacity within the school to promote further improvements.

### **External support**

The local authority has continued to provide good support to the school. They have brokered the secondment of experienced teachers and there are appropriate plans in place to secure permanent appointments as soon as possible. Advisers and consultants have provided a great deal of support and training and are rightly stepping back as capacity is increasing within the school.