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27 November 2013

Wendy Wakefield & Rachel Hames  
Interim Headteachers  
Richard Hill Church of England Primary School  
Anstey Lane  
Thurcaston  
LE7 7JA

Dear Mrs Wakefield & Miss Hames

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Richard Hill Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 26 November 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 September 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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:

- include in the school improvement plan the proportion of pupils who will be making better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics in each year group; this should help leaders and governors to measure the success of teaching over time
- ensure that all leaders' evaluation of teaching has a sharp focus on how well pupils are learning in lessons
- make sure that the review of governance enables governors to fully hold leaders to account for pupils' achievement.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with both of you as interim headteachers, two governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body and the Diocesan Education Officer. We visited all classes with one of the interim headteachers to look at the learning that was taking place. Senior leaders' record of checking the quality of teaching and the school improvement plan were evaluated.

## **Context**

Since the school's last inspection, one teacher has been on long-term sick leave. A new permanent headteacher is expected to take up the post from January 2014.

## **Main findings**

Following the last inspection governors have taken decisive action to strengthen the school's leadership. Senior leaders have raised teachers' expectations about how much more pupils could and should be achieving from their starting points. These raised expectations are also reflected in the setting of more challenging performance management targets for teachers. The targets link directly to the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement. Suitable training is making sure that there is a better and more consistent approach to improving pupils' writing. This is resulting in greater quantity across a range of subjects and pupils being more imaginative in the quality of their writing. Improvements in teachers' marking and pupils responding to advice given are also evident in the work seen by us during this visit. This is supported by your own checking of pupils' work since the last inspection.

Leaders are more rigorous in checking how well pupils are making progress, having increased the frequency of such checks. However, not all leaders focus sharply on how well different groups of pupils are doing when observing lessons. As interim headteachers, you are determined that training, including for subject leaders, addresses this weakness quickly.

Governors who met the inspector are passionate about making sure that there is secure improvement in pupils' achievement. Individual governors are active in gaining first hand evidence about the school's work, for example by carrying out 'learning walks' and meeting with pupils. An external review of governance is imminent and the governing body's draft action plan will be adjusted in the light of the findings of the review.

The school improvement plan, supplemented by a post-inspection plan, clearly deals with all of the areas identified as requiring improvement. There are appropriate measurable criteria to check how well actions are making a difference to pupils' achievement. However, the plan does not refer clearly enough to the proportions of pupils who are capable of making better than expected progress.

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**

There is a strong link with a local school where one of the interim headteachers is the substantive headteacher. This link is being used to improve teaching further and

is set to continue to mentor the new headteacher. Support from the Diocese to appoint the new headteacher is seen by governors as being very helpful.

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

Yours sincerely

Dilip Kadodwala  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**